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F O N E S's

# BRITISH THEATRE.

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VOL. IX.

CONTAINING,

I.

THE WAY TO KEEP HIM.

II.

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

III.

THE WONDER.

IV.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

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D U B L I N:

PRINTED BY JOHN CHAMBERS,  
FOR WILLIAM JONES, No. 86, DAME-STREET.

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1795.



BRITISH THEATRE

VOL. II.



THE WORKS

OF

D. D. I. M.

PRINTED BY JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

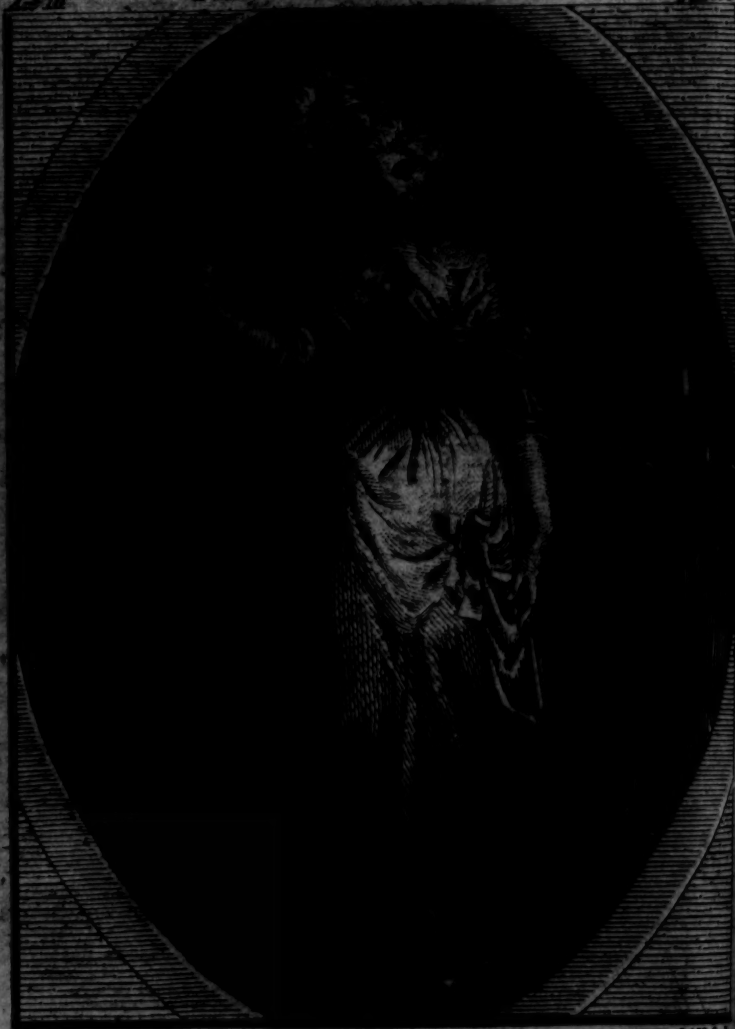
FOR WILLIAM JONES, 10, DARTMOUTH STREET

1793



THE WAY TO KEEP HIM.

James



W. Rodall/sep

M<sup>rs</sup> ABINGTON as WIDOW BELMOUR.

*Oh! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray,  
Can make tomorrow cheerful as to day.*

Dublin Publish'd by W. Jones 86 Dame-street.



Burney sculp.

W. E. Edall sculp.

Dublin Published by W. Jones, 86 Dame Street.





THE  
WAY TO KEEP HIM.

COMEDY.

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By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

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ADAPTED FOR  
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE  
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

---

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

*By Permission of the Managers.*

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"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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DUBLIN:

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PRINTED BY J. CHAMBERS,  
FOR WILLIAM JONES, No. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCIV.

THE  
WAY TO KEEP HIM.

COMEDY.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN.



REPRODUCED FROM THE PUBLISHED COPY.

By J. C. M. & Co. Dublin.

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN, HAS THE HONOUR TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE ABOVE PLAY WILL BE PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN, ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1855.

DUBLIN:

JOHN C. M. & CO. PRINTERS.

PRINTED BY J. C. M. & CO.

FOR WILLIAM JONES, NO. 24, NASSAU STREET.

WILLIAM JONES.

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TO  
MRS. ABINGTON.

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MADAM,

YOU will be surprised, at this distance of time, and in this public manner, to receive an answer to a very polite letter, which you addressed to me in the course of the last summer at Yarmouth. In a strain of vivacity, which always belongs to you, you invite me to write again for the Stage. You tell me, that having gone through the Comedies of THE WAY TO KEEP HIM, ALL IN THE WRONG, and THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE, you now want more from the same hand. I am not bound, you say, by my resolution, signified in a Prologue about ten years ago, to take my leave of the Dramatic Muse. At the perjuries of poets, as well as lovers, Jove laughs; and the public, you think, will be ready to give me a general release from the promise. All this is very flattering. If the following Scenes, at the end of five and twenty years, still continue to be a part of the public amusement, I know to what cause I am to ascribe it. Those graces of action, with which you adorn whatever you undertake, have given to the Piece a degree of brilliancy, and even novelty, as often as you have repeated it. I am not unmindful of the Performers who first obtained for the Author the favour of the Town: a GARRICK, a YATES, a CIBBER, united their abilities; and who

can forget Mrs. CLIVE? They have all passed away, and the COMEDY might have passed with them, if you had not so frequently placed it in a conspicuous light.

The truth is, without such talents as yours, all that the Poet writes is a dead letter. He designs for representation, but it is the Performer that gives to the draught, however justly traced, a form, a spirit, a countenance, and a mind. All this you have done for the WIDOW BELLMOUR; and that excellence in your art, which you are known to possess, can, no doubt, lend the same animation to any new character. But alas! I have none to offer. That tinder in the Poet's mind, which, as Doctor YOUNG says, takes fire from every spark, I have not found, even though you have endeavoured to kindle the flame. Could I write, as you can act, I should be proud to obey your commands: but after a long dispute, how shall I recover the train of thinking necessary for plot, humour, incident, and character?

In the place of novelty, permit me to request that *The Way to Keep Him* may be inscribed to you. You are intitled to it, Madam; for your talents have made the Play your own. A Dedication, I grant, at this period of time, comes rather late; but being called upon for a new edition, I have retouched the dialogue, and perhaps so reformed the whole, that, in its present state, it may be deemed less unworthy of your acceptance. It is, therefore, my wish, that this address may in future attend the Comedy, to remain (as long as such a thing

DEDICATION.

v

can remain) a tribute due to the GENIUS OF MRS.  
ABINGTON, and a mark of that esteem, with which I  
subscribe myself,

Madam,

Your real admirer,

And most obedient Servant,

ARTHUR MURPHY.

Lincoln's-Inn,  
25th Nov. 1785.



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## PROLOGUE.

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*WHEN first the haughty critic's dreadful rage,  
With Gothic fury, over-ran the stage,  
Then Prologues rose, and strove with varied art  
To gain the soft accesses to the heart.  
Thro' all the tuneful tribe th' infection flew,  
And each Great Genius—his petition drew ;  
In formâ pauperis address'd the Pit,  
With all the gay antithesis of wit.  
Their sacred art poor poets own'd a crime ;  
They sigh'd in simile, they bow'd in rhyme.  
For charity they all were forc'd to beg ;  
And every Prologue was " a wooden leg."*

*. Next these a hardy, manly race appear'd,  
Who knew no dullness, and no critics fear'd.  
From Nature's store each curious tint they drew,  
Then boldly held the piece to public view :  
" Lo ! here, exact proportion ! just design !  
" The bold relief ! and the unerring line !  
" Mark in soft union how the colours strike !  
" This, Sirs, you will, or this you ought to like."  
They bid defiance to the foes of wit,  
" Scatter'd like ratsbane up and down the Pit."*

*Such Prologues were of yore ;—our bard to-night  
Disdains a false compassion to excite :*

*Nor too secure your judgment would oppose ;  
He packs no jury, AND HE DREADS NO FOES.  
To govern here no party can expect ;  
An audience will preserve its own respect.*

*To catch the foibles, that misguide the fair,  
From trifles spring, and end in lasting care,  
Our author aims ; nor this alone he tries,  
But as fresh objects, and new manners rise,  
He bids his canvass glow with various dyes ;  
Where sense and folly mix in dubious strife,  
Alternate rise, and struggle into life.  
Judge if with art the mimic strokes he blend ;  
If amicably light and shade contend ;  
The mental features if he trace with skill ;  
See the Piece first, then damn it if you will.*

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**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**


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**DRURT-LANE.**


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*Men.*

LOVEMORE,	Mr. Wroughton.
Sir BASHFUL CONSTANT,	Mr. King.
Sir BRILLIANT FASHION,	Mr. Dodd.
WILLIAM, <i>servant to Lovemore,</i>	Mr. R. Palmer.
SIDEBOARD, <i>servant to Sir Bashful,</i>	Mr. Burton.
POMPEY, <i>a black servant,</i>	Miss Gaudry.
JOHN,	Mr. Phillimore.

*Women.*

Mrs. LOVEMORE,	Mrs. Ward.
The Widow BELLMOUR,	Miss Farren.
Lady CONSTANT,	Mrs. Kemble.
MUSLIN, <i>maid to Mrs. Lovemore,</i>	Miss Pope.
MIGNIONET, <i>maid to Mrs. Bellmour,</i>	Miss Tidswell.
FURNISH, <i>maid to Lady Constant,</i>	Miss Heard.

SCENE, London.

THE  
WAY TO KEEP HIM.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in LOVEMORE's House. WILLIAM  
and SIDEBORD discovered at a Game of Cards.*

*William.*

**A** PLAGUE go with it! I have turned out my  
game: Is forty-seven good?

*Side.* Equal.

*Will.* Confound the cards! tierce to a queen?

*Side.* Equal.

*Will.* There again! ruined, stock and block; no  
thing can save me. I don't believe there is a foot-  
man in England plays with worse luck than my-  
self. Four aces are fourteen.

*Side.* That's hard, cruel by Jupiter! Aces against  
me every time.

*Will.* Four aces are fourteen: fifteen. [*Plays.*

*Side.* There's your equality.

*Will.* Very well: I turned out my point. Sixteen; [*Plays*] seventeen. [*Plays.*]

*Enter MUSLIN.*

*Mus.* There's a couple of you, indeed! You are so fond of the vices of your betters, that you are scarce out of your beds, but you must imitate them and their profligate ways. Set you up forsooth!

*Will.* Pr'ythee be quiet, woman, do. Eighteen. [*Plays.*]

*Mus.* Upon my word!—With your usual ease, Mr. Coxcomb.

*Will.* Manners, Mrs. Muslin: you see Mr. Sideboard here; he is just come on a message from Sir Bashful Constant. Have some respect for a stranger. Nineteen, clubs. [*Plays.*]

*Mus.* It would become Mr. Sideboard to go back with his answer, and it would become you to send my lady word——

*Will.* Command your tongue, Mrs. Muslin: you'll put me out. What shall I play?—He will go back with his answer in good time. Let his master wait till it suits our conveniency. Nineteen, clubs: where shall I go now?

*Mus.* Have done with your folly, Mr. Impertinent. My lady desires to know——

*Will.* I tell you, woman, my master and I desire to have nothing to do with you and your lady. Twenty, diamonds. [*Plays.*]

*Mus.* But I tell you, Mr. Brazen, that my lady desires to know at what hour your master came home last night, and how he does this morning?



*Will.* Ridiculous! Don't disturb us with that nonsense now; you see I am not at leisure. I and my master are resolved to be teased no more by you; and so, Mrs. Go-between, you may return as you came. What the devil shall I play? We will have nothing to do with you, I tell you.

*Mus.* You'll have nothing to do with us? But you shall have to do with us, or I'll know the reason why. [*She snatches the cards from him, and throws them about.*]

*Will.* Death and fury! this meddling woman has destroyed my whole game. A man might as well be married, as be treated in this fashion.

*Side.* I shall score you for this, Mr. William: I was sure of the cards, and that would have made me up.

*Will.* No you'll score nothing for this. You win too much of me. I am a very pretty annuity to you.

*Side.* Annuity, say you? I lose a fortune to you in the course of the year. How could you, Mrs. Muslin, behave in this sort to persons of our dignity?

*Mus.* Decamp with your dignity; take your answer to your master; turn upon your rogue's heel, and rid the house.

*Side.* I shan't dispute with you. I hate wrangling: I leave that to lawyers and married people; they have nothing else to do. Mr. William, I shall let Sir Bashful know that Mr. Lovemore will be at home for him. When you come to our house, I'll give you your revenge. We can have a snug

party there, and I promise you a glass of choice Champagne: it happens to be a good batch; Sir Bashful gets none of it; I keep it for my own friends. *Au revoir.* [Exit.

*Will.* (*To Muslin.*) You see what mischief you have made.

*Mus.* Truce with your foolery; and now, sir, be so obliging as to send my lady an answer to her questions: How and when your rakehell master came home last night?

*Will.* I'll tell you one thing, Mrs. Muslin; you and my master will be the death of me at last. In the name of charity, what do you both take me for? Whatever appearances may be, I am but of mortal mould; nothing supernatural about me.

*Mus.* Upon my word, Mr. Powder-Puff!

*Will.* I have not, indeed; and flesh and blood, let me tell you, can't hold it always at this rate. I can't be for ever a slave to Mr. Lovemore's eternal frolics, and to your second-hand airs.

*Mus.* Second-hand airs!

*Will.* Yes, second-hand airs! you take them at your ladies' toilets with their cast gowns, and so you descend to us with them.—And then on the other hand, there's my master!—Because he chooses to live upon the principal of his health, and so run out his whole stock as fast as he can, he must have my company with him in his devil's dance to the other world! Never at home till three, four, five, six in the morning.

*Mus.* Ay, a vile ungrateful man! always ranging abroad, and no regard for a wife that dotes upon

him. And your love for me is all of a piece. I have no patience with you both; a couple of false, perfidious, abandoned profligates!

*Will.* Hey! where is your tongue running? My master, as the world goes, is a good sort of a civil kind of a husband; and I, heaven help me! a poor simpleton of a constant, amorous puppy, who bears with all the whims of my little tyrant here. Come and kiss me, you jade, come and kiss me.

*Mus.* Paws off, Cæsar. Don't think to make me your dupe. I know when you go with him to this new lady, this Bath acquaintance; and I know you are as false as my master, and give all my dues to your Mrs. Mignonet there.

*Will.* Hush! not a word of that. I am ruined, pressed, and sent on board a tender directly, if you blab that I trusted you with that secret.—But to charge me with falsehood!—injustice and ingratitude!—My master, to be sure, does drink an agreeable dish of tea with the widow. He has been there every evening this month past. How long things are to be in this train, heaven only knows. But he does visit there, and I attend him. I ask my master, Sir, says I, what time will you please to want me? He fixes the hour, and I strut by Mrs. Mignonet, without so much as tipping her a single glance. She stands watering at the mouth, and ‘a pretty fellow that,’ says she: Ay, gaze on, say I, gaze on: I know what you would be at: you would be glad to have me: but four grapes, my dear; and so home I come, to cherish my own lovely little wanton: you know I do, and after toying

with thee, I fly back to my master, later indeed than he appoints, but always too soon for him. He is loth to part: he lingers and dangles, and I stand cooling my heels. Oh! to the devil I pitch such a life.

*Muf.* Why don't you strive to reclaim the vile man?

*Will.* Softly; not so fast. I have my talent to be sure; yes, I must acknowledge some talent. But can you suppose that I have power to turn the drift of his inclinations? Can I give him a new taste, and lead him as I please? And to whom? To his wife? Ridiculous! A wife has no attraction now; the spring of the passions flies back; it won't do.

*Muf.* Fine talking! and you admire yourself for it, don't you? Can you proceed, sir?

*Will.* I tell you a wife is out of date: the time was, but that's all over; a wife is a drug now; mere tar-water, with every virtue under heaven, but nobody takes it.

*Muf.* Have done, or I'll print these ten nails upon your rogue's face.

*Will.* Come and kiss me, I say.

*Muf.* A fiddlestick for your kisses, while you encourage your master to open rebellion against the best of wives.

*Will.* I tell you 'tis all her own fault. Why does not she study to please him as you do me. Come and throw your arms about my neck.

*Muf.* As I used to do, Mr. Impudence?

*Will.* Then I must force you to your own good.

[*Kisses her.*] Pregnant with delight! egad, if my master was not in the next room—— [*Bell rings.*]

*Mus.* Hush! my lady's bell: how long has he been up?

*Will.* He has been up—[*Kisses her.*] 'Sdeath! you have set me all on fire. [*Kisses her.*]

*Mus.* There, there; have done now; the bell rings again. What must I say? When did he come home?

*Will.* He came home—[*Kisses her.*]—he came home at five this morning; damned himself for a blockhead; [*Kisses.*] went to bed in a surly humour; was tired of himself and of every body else. [*Bell rings, he kisses her.*] And he is now in tip-toe spirits with Sir Brilliant Fashion in that room yonder.

*Mus.* Sir Brilliant Fashion? I wish my lady would mind what he says to her—You great bear! you have given me such a flush in my face! [*Takes a pocket looking-glass.*] I look pretty well, I think. There [*Kisses him.*] have done and let me be gone. [*Exit.*]

*Will.* There goes high and low life contrasted in one person. She has not dived to the bottom of my master's secrets; that's one good thing. What she knows, she'll blab. We shall hear of this widow from Bath: but the plot lies deeper than they are aware of. Inquire they will; and let 'em, say I; their answer will do 'em no good. 'Mr. Lovemore visit the widow Bellmour?' We know 'no such person.' That's what they'll get for their pains. Their puzzle will be greater



than ever, and they may sit down to chew the cud of disappointed malice.—Hush! my master and Sir Brilliant: I'll take care of a single rogue, and get me out of their way. *[Exit.]*

*Enter LOVEMORE and Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Love.* My dear Sir Brilliant, I must both pity and laugh at you. Thou art metamorphosed into the most whimsical being!

*Sir Bril.* If your raillery diverts you, go on with it. This is always the case: apply for sober advice, and your friend plays you off with a joke.

*Love.* Sober advice! very far gone indeed. There is no such thing as talking soberly to the tribe of lovers. That eternal absence of mind that possesses you all! There is no society with you. I was damnable company myself, when I was one of the pining herd: but a dose of matrimony has cooled me pretty handsomely; and here comes *repetatur haustus.*

*Enter MUSLIN.*

*Musl.* My lady sends her compliments, and begs to know how you do this morning.

*Love.* *[Aside to Sir Bril.]* The novelty of the compliment is enlivening—It is the devil to be teased in this manner.—What did you say, child?

*Musl.* My lady hopes you find yourself well this morning.

*Love.* Ay, your lady:—give her my compliments, and tell her—and tell her I hope she is well, and—

*[Yawns.]*

*Mus.* She begs you won't think of going out without seeing her.

*Love.* To be sure, she has such variety every time one sees her—my head aches wofully—tell your lady—I shall be glad to see her; I'll wait on her—*[Tawns]* tell her what you will.

*Mus.* A brute!—I shall let my lady know, sir. *[Exit.*

*Love.* My dear Sir Brilliant, you see me an example before your eyes. Put the widow Bellmour out of your head, and let my Lord Etheridge be the victim for you.

*Sir Bril.* Positively no; my pride is picqued. My Lord Etheridge shall find me a more formidable rival than he imagines. By the way, how long has the noble peer been in England?

*Love.* His motions are unknown to me.—*[Aside.]* I don't like that question.—His lordship is in France, is not he?

*Sir Bril.* No; he is certainly returned. The match is to be concluded privately.—He visits her *incog.*

*Love.* *[Forcing a laugh.]* Oh! no; that can't be; my Lord Etheridge loves parade. I cannot help laughing. The jealousy of you lovers is for ever conjuring up phantoms to torment yourselves. My dear Sir Brilliant, wait for realities; there are enough in life, and you may teach your fancy to be at rest, and give you no further trouble.

*Sir Bril.* Nay, don't let your fancy run away with you. What I tell you, is the real truth.

*Love.* Well, if it be true, and if Lord Etheridge is

come to England to marry, do you go to France not to marry, and you will have the best of the bargain.

*Enter WILLIAM.*

*Will.* Sir Bashful Constant is in his chariot at the upper end of the street, and if your honour is at leisure, he will wait upon you.

*Love.* Have not I sent him word I should be at home? Let him come as soon as he will. [*Exit William.*] Another instance, Sir Brilliant, to deter you from all thoughts of matrimony.

*Sir Bril.* Po! hang him; he is no precedent for me. A younger brother, who lived in middling life, comes to a title and an estate on the death of a consumptive baronet; marries a woman of quality, and now carries the primitive ideas of his narrow education into high life. Don't you remember when he had chambers in Fig-tree-court, and used to faunter and lounge away his time in Temple coffee-houses? The fellow is as dull as a bill in Chancery.

*Love.* But he is improved since that time.

*Sir Bril.* Impossible; don't you see how he goes on? He knows nothing of the world; if his eyes meet yours, he blushes up to his ears, and looks suspicious as if he imagined you have a design upon him.

*Love.* I can explain that part of his character. He has a mortal aversion to wit and raillery, and dreads nothing so much as being laughed at for being particular.

*Sir Bril.* And so, fearing to be ridiculous, he becomes substantially so every moment.

*Love.* Even so, and if you look at him, he shrinks back from your observation, casting a sly, slow, jealous eye all round him, like Miss Bumpkin in a country village, awkwardly endeavouring to conceal what the increase of her shape discovers to the whole parish.

*Sir Bril.* And then his behaviour to his lady!

*Love.* Why, as to that point, I don't think he hates her. His fear of ridicule may be at the bottom. He has strange notions about the dignity of a husband. There is a secret, which he would fain tell me, and yet he is shy, and he hints, and he hesitates, and then he retreats back into himself, and ends just where he began. But with all his faults, he has fits of good-nature.—There;—his chariot's at the door.

*Sir Bril.* Lady Constant, you mean, has fits of good-nature. Have you made any progress there?

*Love.* That's well from you, who are the formidable man in that quarter.

*Sir Bril.* Oh! no; positively, no pretence, no colour for it.

*Love.* Don't I know that you have made advances?

*Sir Bril.* Advances! I pity my Lady Constant, and——

*Love.* Well, that's generous—hush! I hear him coming. Sir Brilliant, I admire your amorous charity of all things!

*Enter Sir BASHFUL CONSTANT.*

*Sir Bash.* Mr. Lovemore, I have taken the liberty—but you seem to be busy, and I intrude perhaps.

*Love.* Oh, by no means: walk in, Sir Bashful.

*Sir Bash.* Sir Brilliant, I am glad to see you.

[*Bows awkwardly.*]

*Sir Brill.* You do me honour, sir, I hope you left my lady well.

*Sir Bash.* I can't say, sir. I am not her physician.

*Sir Brill.* [*Aside.*] An absurd brute!—Lovemore, I'll just step and pay a short visit to our friend over the way.

*Love.* Why in such a hurry?

*Sir Brill.* I shall return immediately. I'll be with you before you are dressed. Sir Bashful, I kiss your hand.

[*Exit.*]

*Sir Bash.* I am glad he is gone. I have something, Mr. Lovemore, that I want to advise with you about.

*Love.* Have you?

*Sir Bash.* I have had another brush with my wife.

*Love.* I am sorry for it, Sir Bashful.—[*Aside.*] I am perfectly glad of it.

*Sir Bash.* Pretty warm the quarrel was. She took it in a high tone. Sir Bashful, says she, I wonder you will disgrace yourself at this rate. You know my pin-money is not sufficient. The mercer and every body dunning me! I can't go on after this fashion, says she, and then something about her quality.—You know, Mr. Lovemore, [*Smiling.*] she is a woman of high quality.

*Love.* Yes, and a very fine woman.

*Sir Bash.* No, no, no; not much of that—and yet—[*Looks at him and smiles.*] Do you think her a fine woman?



*Love.* Undoubtedly; where do you see any body that outshines her?

*Sir Bash.* Why to be sure—[*Smiling.*] one does not often see her eclipsed. I think she is what you may call a fine woman. She keeps good company.

*Love.* The very best.

*Sir Bash.* Yes, yes; your tiptop, none else. And yet to encourage her too far were dangerous. Too complying a husband makes but a sorry figure in the eyes of the world.

*Love.* The world will talk, Sir Bashful.

*Sir Bash.* Too fast, Mr. Lovemore. Their tongues will run on, and one does not like to give them a subject. I answered her stoutly: Madam, says I, a fig for your quality: I am master in my own house, and who do you think—[*Winks at Lovemore.*] putting myself in a passion, you know—Who do you think is to pay for your cats and your dogs, and your monkeys, and your squirrels, and your gaming debts?

*Love.* How could you? That was sharply said.

*Sir Bash.* Yes; I gave it her. But for all that I am main good-natured at the bottom.

*Love.* You was not in earnest then?

*Sir Bash.* No, no; that's the point: a man must keep up his own dignity. I'll tell you what I did.

*Love.* Well;—you did what's proper, I dare say.

*Sir Bash.* I hope you'll think so.—Don't laugh at me.—Come, I will tell you. I went to her



mercier flily, and paid him the money. [*Smiling.*

*Love.* Did you?

*Sir Bash.* [*Looking alarmed.*] Was not it right?

*Love.* It was elegant.

*Sir Bash.* I am glad you approve. I took care to save appearances. One would not have the world know it.

*Love.* By no means.

*Sir Bash.* It would make them think me too uxorious.

*Love.* So it would—[*Aside.*] I must encourage that notion. While you live, guard against being too uxorious. Though our wives deserve "our fondness," the world will laugh at us;—and hark ye, if our wives don't deserve it, they'll laugh at us the more.

*Sir Bash.* I know it. And so, says I, Mr. Lutestring, there's your money, but tell no body that I paid it flily.

*Love.* Why, that's doing a genteel thing by stratagem.—Admirably contrived!

*Sir Bash.* I think it was. But I have a deeper secret for you.

*Love.* Have you?

*Sir Bash.* I have.—May I trust you?

*Love.* Now there you hurt me. I feel that, Sir Bashful.

*Sir Bash.* I beg your pardon. I know you are my friend. I have great confidence in you. You must know—look ye, Mr. Lovemore—you must know—

*Enter MUSLIN.*

*Mus.* My lady desires to know if you choose a dish of tea this morning.

*Love.* Po! ridiculous!—tell your mistress—go about your business. [*Turns her out.*]

*Sir Bask.* I see how it is. He does not care a cherry-stone for his wife.

*Love.* Such impertinence!—Well, Sir Baskful.

*Sir Bask.* He does not value her a pinch of snuff. [*Aside.*]

*Love.* Well, I am all attention.

*Sir Bask.* It does not signify. A foolish affair; I won't trouble you.

*Love.* Nay, that's unkind. It will be no trouble.

*Sir Bask.* Well, well, I—I—Do you think Mustin did not overhear us?

*Love.* Not a syllable. Come, we are safe.

*Sir Bask.* I don't know but—let me ask you a question first.—Have you any regard for your lady?

*Love.* The highest value for her. But then you know appearances—

*Sir Bask.* Right!—I repose it with you.—You must know, Mr. Lovemore, as I told you, I am at the bottom very good-natured, and though it may be thought—we are interrupted again.

*Enter Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Sir Brill.* Lovemore, I have paid my visit.

*Love.* Pshaw!—this is unlucky—you are as good as your word, Sir Brilliant.

*Sir Brill.* Perhaps you have business?

*Sir Bask.* No, no business—[*Turns to Love.*]

more.] there's no proceeding now—I was going to Sir Brilliant. Mr. Lovemore, I wish you a good day.

*Love.* Po! Pr'ythee, you shan't leave me yet.

*Sir Basb.* I must; I can't stay. [*Aside to Lovemore.*] Another time. Suppose you call at my house at one o'clock.

*Love.* With all my heart.

*Sir Basb.* Do so; nobody shall interrupt us, Mr. Lovemore, I take my leave. Sir Brilliant, I kiss your hand. You won't forget, Mr. Lovemore?

*Love.* Oh! no; depend upon me.

*Sir Basb.* A good morning. He is the only friend I have. [*Exit.*]

*Love.* Ha, ha! you broke in in the most critical moment. He was just going to be delivered of his secret.

*Sir Brill.* I beg your pardon. How could you let me?

*Love.* Nay, no matter. I shall worm it out of him.

*Enter MUSLIN.*

*Musl.* My lady, sir, is quite impatient.

*Love.* Po! for ever teasing! I'll wait upon her presently. [*Exit Muslin.*]

*Sir Brill.* I'll step and chat with her while you dress. May I take the liberty?

*Love.* You know you may: no ceremony. How could you ask me such a question?—Apropos, Sir Brilliant, I want a word with you. Step with me into the study for a moment.

*Sir Brill.* I attend you.

*Love.* Poor Sir Bashful!—ha, ha!—a ridiculous unaccountable—What does he mean?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Another Apartment. Mrs. LOVEMORE at her Tea-Table.*

*Mrs. Love.* This trash of tea! I don't know why I drink so much of it. Heigho!—What keeps Muslin? Surely never was an unhappy woman treated with such cruel indifference; nay, with such open, such undiguis'd insolence of gallantry.

*Enter MUSLIN.*

*Mrs. Love.* Well, Muslin, have you seen his prime minister?

*Mus.* Yes, ma'am, I have seen Mr. William. He says his master is going out, according to the old trade, and he does not expect to see him again till to-morrow morning. Mr. Lovemore is now in the study. Sir Brilliant Fashion is with him: I heard them, as I pass'd by the door, laughing as loud as two actors in a comedy.

*Mrs. Love.* About some precious mischief, I'll be sworn, and all at my cost. Heigho!

*Mus.* Dear ma'am, why chagrine yourself about a vile man, that is not worth—no, as I hope for mercy, not worth a single sigh?

*Mrs. Love.* What can I do, Muslin?

*Mus.* Do, ma'am!—If I was as you, I'd do for him. If I could not cure my grief, I'd find some comfort, that's what I would.

*Mrs. Love.* Comfort? alas! there is none for me.

*Mus.* And whose fault then? Would any body but you—It provokes me to think of it—Would any but you,—young, handsome, with wit, graces, talents,—would any body, with so many accomplishments, sit at home here as melancholy as a poor servant out of place?—And all for what? For a husband! And such a husband! What do you think the world will say of you, ma'am?

*Mrs. Love.* I care not what they say, I am tired of the world, and the world may be tired of me, if it will. My troubles are to myself only, and I must endeavour to bear them. Who knows what patience may do? If Mr. Lovemore has any feeling left, my conduct and his own heart may one day incline him to do me justice.

*Mus.* But, dear ma'am, that's waiting for dead men's shoes. Incline him to do you justice!—What signifies expecting and expecting? Give me a bird in the hand. If all the women in London, who happen to be in your case, were to sit down and die of the spleen, what would become of the public places? They might turn Vauxhall to a hop-garden; make a brewhouse of Ranelagh, and let both the playhouses to a methodist preacher. We should not have the racketting we have now. John, let the horses be put to—John, go to my Lady



Trumpabout, and invite her to a small party of twenty or thirty card tables.—John, run to my Lady Catgut, and let her know I'll wait upon her ladyship to the opera.—John, run as fast as ever you can, with my compliments to Mr. Varney, and tell him it will be the death of me, if I have not a box for the new play. Lord bless you, ma'am, they rantipole it about this town, with as unconcerned looks, and as florid outfaces, as if they were treated at home like so many goddesses; though every body knows possession has ungoddessed them all long ago, and their husbands care no more for them, no, by Jingo, no more than they care for their husbands.

*Mrs. Love.* At what a rate you run on!

*Mus.* It is enough to make a body run on. If every body thought like you, ma'am—

*Mrs. Love.* If every body loved like me!

*Mus.* A brass thimble for love, if it is not returned by love. What the deuce is here to do? Love for love is something: but to love alone, where's the good of that? Shall I go and fix my heart upon a man, who shall despise me for that very reason? And ay, says he, 'Poor fool! I see she adores me. The woman is well enough, only she has one inconvenient circumstance about her; I am married to her, and marriage is the devil'.

*Mrs. Love.* Will you have done?

*Mus.* I have not half done, ma'am. And when the vile man goes a rogueing, he smiles impudently in your face, 'and I am going to the chocolate-house, my dear; amuse yourself in

the mean time, my love.' Fye upon 'em! I know 'em all. Give me a husband that will enlarge the circle of my innocent pleasures: but a husband now-a-days is no such thing, A husband now is nothing but a scare-crow, to shew you the fruit, but touch it if you dare. The devil's in 'em, the Lord forgive me for swearing. A husband is a mere bugbear, a snap-dragon, a monster; that is to say, if one makes him so, then he is a monster indeed; and if one do not make him so, then he behaves like a monster; and of the two evils, by my troth——But here, ma'am, here comes one who can tell you all about it. Here comes Sir Brilliant: ask his advice, ma'am.

*Mrs. Love.* His advice?——Ask advice of the man, who has estranged Mr. Lovemore's affections from me?

*Mus.* Well, I protest and vow, I think Sir Brilliant a very pretty gentleman. He is the very pink of the fashion. He dresses fashionably, lives fashionably, wins your money fashionably, loses his own fashionably, and does every thing fashionably; and then he looks so lively, and so much to say, and so never at a loss!——but here he comes.

*Enter Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Sir Bril.* Mrs. Lovemore, my dear ma'am, always in a vis-a-vis party with your *suivante*?——Afford me your pardon, if I say this does a little wear the appearance of being out of humour with the world.

*Mrs. Love.* Far from it, Sir Brilliant. We were engaged in your panegyric.

*Sir Bril.* My panegyric? Then am I come most apropos to give the portrait a few finishing touches. Mr. Lovemore, as soon as he is dressed, will wait upon you: in the mean time, I can help you to some anecdotes, which will enable you to colour your canvass a little higher.

*Mrs. Love.* Among those anecdotes, I hope you will not omit the bright exploit of seducing Mr. Lovemore from all domestic happiness.

[*She makes a sign to Muslin to go.*]

*Sir Bril.* I, madam?—Let me perish if ever—

*Mrs. Love.* Oh! sir, I can make my observations.

*Sir Bril.* May fortune eternally forsake me, and beauty frown on me, if I am conscious of any plot upon earth.

*Mrs. Love.* Don't assert too strongly, Sir Brilliant.

*Sir Bril.* May I never throw a winning cast—

*Mrs. Love.* It is in vain to deny it, sir.

*Sir Bril.* May I lose the next sweepstakes, if I have ever, in thought, word or deed, been accessory to his infidelity. I alienate the affections of Mr. Lovemore! Consider, madam, how would this tell in Westminster Hall? Sir Brilliant Fashion, what say you, guilty of this indictment or not guilty? Not guilty, poss. Thus issue is joined. You enter the court: but, my dear madam, veil those graces that adorn your person: abate the fire of those charms: so much beauty will corrupt the judges: give me a fair trial.

*Mrs. Love.* And thus you think to laugh it away.

*Sir Bril.* Nay, hear me out. You appear in court: you charge the whole upon me, without a syllable as to the how, when, and where: no proof positive; the prosecution ends, and I begin my defence.

*Mrs. Love.* And by playing these false colours you think I am to be amused?

*Sir Bril.* Nay, Mrs. Lovemore, I am now upon my defence. Only hear.—You will please to consider, Gentlemen of the Jury, that Mr. Lovemore is not a minor, nor I his guardian. He loves gaiety, pleasure, and enjoyment: is it my fault? He is possessed of talents and a taste for pleasure, which he knows how to gratify: can I restrain him? He knows the world, makes the most of life, and plucks the fruit that grows around him: am I to blame? This is the whole affair.—How say you, Gentlemen of the Jury?—Not guilty. There, you see how it is. I have cleared myself.

*Mrs. Love.* Brisk, lively, and like yourself, Sir Brilliant! But if you can imagine this bantering way—

*Sir Bril.* Acquitted by my country, ma'am; fairly acquitted.

*Mrs. Love.* After the very edifying counsel which you give to Mr. Lovemore, this loose strain is not in the least surprising. And, sir, your late project—

*Sir Bril.* My late project!

*Mrs. Love.* Your late project, fir. Not content with leading Mr. Lovemore into a thousand scenes of dissipation, you have introduced him lately to your mistress Bellmour. You understand me, fir.

*Sir Bril.* Ma'am, he does not so much as know the Widow Bellmour.

*Mrs. Love.* Nay, Sir Brilliant, have a care: justify it if you can, or give it a turn of wit. There is no occasion to hazard yourself too far.

*Sir Bril.* Falseness I disdain, madam, and I, Sir Brilliant Fashion, declare that Mr. Lovemore is not acquainted with the Widow Bellmour. And if he was, what then? Do you know the lady?

*Mrs. Love.* I know her, fir? A person of that character?

*Sir Bril.* Oh!—I see you don't know her; but I will let you into her history.—Pray be seated—you shall know her whole history, and then judge for yourself. The widow Bellmour, madam—

*Love.* [*Within.*] William, are the horses put to?

*Sir Bril.* We are interrupted.

*Enter LOVEMORE.*

*Love.* Very well: let the carriage be brought round directly.—How do you do, my dear?—Sir Brilliant, I beg your pardon.—My love, you don't answer me: how do you do this morning?

[*With an air of cold civility.*]

*Mrs. Love.* A little indisposed in mind: but indisposition of the mind is of no consequence: nobody pities it.



*Love.* I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore. Indisposition of the mind—Sir Brilliant, that's a mighty pretty ring on your finger.

*Sir Bril.* A bauble: will you look at it?

[*Gives the ring.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Though I have but few obligations to Sir Brilliant, I suppose I am to ascribe to him the favour of this visit, Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* [*Looking at the ring and laughing.*] Now there you wrong me.—Your inquiries about my health have been very obliging this morning, and I came to return the compliment before I got out.—It is set very neatly. [*Gives back the ring.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Are you going out, sir?

*Love.* A matter of business—How I do hate business! But business—[*examining his ruffles*]—business must be done.—Pray is there any news?—Any news, my dear?

*Mrs. Love.* It would be news to me, sir, if you would be kind enough to let me know whether I may expect the favour of your company at dinner to-day?

*Love.* It would be impertinent in me to answer such a question, for I can give no direct answer to it.—I am the slave of events; just as things happen; perhaps I may; perhaps not. But don't let me be of any inconvenience to you. Is it material where a body eats?—Have you heard what happened to me? [*Aside to Sir Brilliant.*]

*Sir Bril.* When and where?

*Love.* A word in your ear—with your permission, ma'am?

*Mrs. Love.* That cold, contemptuous civility,  
Mr. Lovemore——

*Love.* Po! pr'ythee now, how can you?—that is very peevish, and very ill-natured. [*Turning to Sir Brill.*] I lost every thing I played for after you went. The foreigner and he understand one another.—I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore: it was only about an affair at the opera.

*Mrs. Love.* The opera, or any thing, is more agreeable than my company.

*Love.* Now there again you wrong me. [*To Sir Brilliant.*] We dine at the St. Alban's.—How can you, Mrs. Lovemore? I make it a point not to incommode you. You possibly may have some private party; and it would be unpolite in me to obstruct your schemes of pleasures. Would not it, Sir Brilliant?

*Sir Brill.* Oh!—Gothic to the last degree!

*Love.* Very true: vulgar and mechanic! [*Both stand laughing.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Go on; make sport for yourselves, gentlemen.

*Love.* Ho! ho! ho! I am fore with laughing.—If you, madam, have arranged an agreeable party, for me to be present, it would look as if we lived together like Sir Bashful Constant and his lady; who are always, like two game-cocks, ready armed to goad and spur one another. Hey! Sir Brilliant?

*Sir Brill.* Oh! the very thing: or like Sir Theodore Traffic at Tunbridge taking his wife under the arm in the public rooms, and 'come along home, I tell you.'

*Love.* Exactly so. [*Both continue laughing.*] Odds my life! I shall be beyond my time. [*Looks at his watch.*] Any commands into the city, my dear?

*Mrs. Love.* Commands!—no, fir, I have no commands.

*Love.* I have an appointment at my banker's, Sir Brilliant, you know old Discount?

*Sir Brill.* He that was in Parliament, and had the large contract?

*Love.* The same: *Entire Butt*, I think, was the name of his borough. Can I set you down?

*Sir Brill.* No, my carriage waits. I shall rattle half the town over presently.

*Love.* As you will. Sir Brilliant will entertain you, ma'am. *Au revoir*, my love.—Sir Brilliant, yours.—Who waits there? [*Exit singing.*]

*Sir. Brill.* Bon voyage—You see, madam, that I don't deprive you of his company.

*Mrs. Love.* Your influence is now unnecessary. It is grown habitual to him: he will drive to your Mrs. Bellmour, I suppose.

*Sir. Brill.* Apropos; that brings us back to the little history I was going to give you of that lady. What is your charge against her? That she is amiable? Granted. Young, gay, rich, handsome, with enchanting talents, it is no wonder all the pretty fellows are on their knees to her. Her manner so entertaining! that quickness of transition from one thing to another! that round of variety! and every new attitude does so become her; and she has such a feeling heart, and with an air of giddiness so nice a conduct

*Mrs. Love.* Mighty well, fir: she is a very vestal. Finish your portrait. A vestal from your school of painting must be a curiosity—But how comes it, fir, if she is this wonder, that your honourable proposals are at an end there?

*Sir Bril.* Compulsion, ma'am: it is not voluntary. My Lord Etheridge is the happy man. I thought he was out of the kingdom; but his lordship is with her every evening. I can scarce gain admittance; and so all that remains for me, is to do justice to the lady, and console myself in the best way I can for the insufficiency of my pretensions.

*Mrs. Love.* Am I to believe all this?

*Sir Bril.* May the first woman I pay my addresses to, strike me to the center with a supercilious eyebrow, if every syllable is not minutely true.—So that you see, I am not the cause of your inquietude.—There is not in the world a person, who more earnestly aspires to prove the tender esteem he bears you.—I have long panted for an opportunity—by all that's soft she listens to me! [*Aside.*—I have long panted, ma'am, for a tender moment like this—

*Mrs. Love.* [*Looking gravely at him.*] Sir!

*Sir Bril.* I have panted with all the ardour, which charms like yours must kindle in every heart!—

*Mrs. Love.* [*Walks away.*] This liberty, fir—

*Sir Bril.* Consider, madam: we have both cause of discontent; both disappointed; both crossed in love; and the least we can do is both to join, and sweeten each other's cares.

*Mrs. Love.* And your friend, fir, who has just left you—

*Sir Bril.* He, madam, for a long time—I have seen it, with vexation seen it,—yes, he has long been false to honour, love, and you.

*Mrs. Love.* Sir Brilliant, I have done. You take my wrongs too much to heart, sir. [*Rings a bell.*]

*"Sir Bril.* Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of, those hills of driven snow!"

*Mrs. Love.* Will nobody answer there?

*Enter MUSLIN.*

*Sir Bril.* Madam, I desist: when you are in better humour, recollect what I have said. Your adorer takes his leave. Sir Brilliant, mind your hits, and her strait-laced virtue will surrender at last. Madam— [*Bows respectfully; Exit.*]

*Mus.* As I live and breathe, ma'am, if I was as you, I would not fluster myself about it.

*Mrs. Love.* About what?

*Mus.* What signifies mincing the matter? I heard it all.

*Mrs. Love.* You did? did you? [*Looks angrily.*]

*Mus.* Ma'am?

*Mrs. Love.* Impertinence! [*Walks about.*] Oh! Mr. Lovemore!—To make his character public, and render him the topic of every tea-table throughout this town! I must avoid that.

*Mus.* What the deuce is here to do?—An unmannerly thing, for to go for to huff me in this manner! [*Aside.*]

*Mrs. Love.* That would only widen the breach, and instead of neglect, might call forth resentment, and settle at last into a fixed aversion: lawyers,



parting, and separate maintenance!—What must be done?

*Muf.* What is she thinking of now?—A fulky thing, not to be more familiar with such a friend as I am.—Did you speak to me, ma'am?

*Mrs. Love.* It may succeed; suppose I try it, Muslin.

*Muf.* Ma'am.

[*Running to her.*

*Mrs. Love.* You heard Sir Brilliant say that Mr. Lovemore is not acquainted with the widow?

*Muf.* Lard, ma'am, he's as full of tricks as a French milliner. I know he does visit there: I know it from William. I'll be hanged in my own garters, if he does not.

*Mrs. Love.* I know not what to do. Let my chair be got ready.

*Muf.* Your chair, ma'am!—Are you going out?

*Mrs. Love.* Let me hear no more questions: do as I order you.

[*Exit.*

*Muf.* Which way is the wind now? No matter; she does not know what she'd be at. If she would but take my advice,—go abroad, visit every where, see the world, throw open her doors, give balls, assemblies, concerts; sing, dance, dress, spend all her money, run in debt, ruin her husband; there would be some sense in that: the man would stay at home then to quarrel with her. She would have enough of his company. But no; mope, mope for ever; heigho! tease, tease, Muslin, step to William; where's his master? When did he come home? How long has he been up? A fine life truly.—I love to be in the fashion, for my part. Bless me.

I had like to have forgot. Mrs. Marmalet comes to my rout to-night. She might as well stay away: she is nothing but mere lumber. The formal thing won't play higher than shilling whist. How the devil does she think I can make a shilling party for her? There is no such a thing now-a-days: nobody plays shilling whist now, unless I was to invite the trades people: but I shan't let myself down for Madam Marmalet, that I promise her. [*Exit.*]

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ACT II. SCENE I.

*An Apartment at Sir BASHFUL CONSTANT'S. Enter Sir BASHFUL.*

*Sir Bashful.*

Did not I hear a rap at the door? Yes, yes, I did; I am right. The carriage is just now driving away. Who answers there? Sideboard; step hither, Sideboard. I must know who it is: my wife keeps the best company in England. Hold, I must be wary. Servants love to pry into their master's secrets.

*Enter SIDEBOARD.*

*Sir Bash.* Whose carriage was that at the door?

*Side.* The Duchess of Hurricane, your honour.

*Sir Bash.* The Duchess of Hurricane? [*Walks aside and smiles.*] A woman of great rank!—what did she want?

*Side.* She has left this card for my lady.

*Sir Bask.* A card? Let me see it. [*Reads.*] *The Duchess of Hurricane presents compliments to Lady Constant. She has left the hounds and the foxes, and the brutes that gallop after them, to their own dear society for the rest of the winter. Her Grace keeps Wednesdays at Hurricane House for the rest of the winter.—Make me thankful, here's a card from a Duchess!—what have you there?*

*Side.* A parcel of cards, that have been left here this morning.

*Sir Bask.* All these in one morning? [*Looks at them.*] Why I may as well keep an inn; may as well keep the Coach and Horses in Piccadilly. [*Reads fast.*] *Lady Riot—Mrs. Allnight—The Duchess of Carmine—look ye there, another duchess! Lady Bassett—Lord Pleurise—the Countess of Ratise—Sir Richard Lungs—Lord Laudamum—Sir Charles Valerian—Lady Hecick—Lady Mary Gabble—I can't bear all this, Sideboard—[Aside and smiling.] I can't bear the pleasure of it: all people of tip-top condition to visit my wife!*

*Enter FURNISH.*

*Sir Bask.* What's the matter, Furnish?

*Fur.* The matter, sir?—Nothing's the matter.

*Sir Bask.* What are you about? Where are you going? What have you to do now?

*Fur.* Only to tell the chairmen they must take Black George with his flambeau with them this evening, and carry the chair to pay visits for my lady.

*Sir Bask.* An empty chair to pay visits!—what polite ways people of fashion have got of being intimate with each other!—[*Aside.*] Absurd as it is, I am glad to see my wife keep pace with the best of them. I laugh at it, and yet I like it.—Wounds! I shall be found out by my servants. I tell you, Sideboard, and you, Mrs. Busy Body, that your mistress leads a life of noise and hurry, and cards and dice, and vanity and nonsense, and I am resolved to bear it no longer.—Don't I hear her coming?

*Fur.* My lady is coming, sir.

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside and smiling.*] She looks charmingly.—Now I'll tell her roundly a piece of my mind. You shall see who commands in this house.

*Enter Lady CONSTANT.*

*Sir Bask.* [*Steals a look.*] I could almost give up the point when I look at her.—So, madam, I have had my house full of duns again to-day.

*Lady Conf.* Obliging creatures, to call so often. What did they want?

*Sir Bask.* Want!—what should they want but money?

*Lady Conf.* And you paid them, I suppose?

*Sir Bask.* You suppose!—'Sdeath, madam, what do you take me for?

*Lady Conf.* I took you for a husband: my brother prescribed you. But his prescription has done me no good.

*Sir Bask.* Nor me either: I have had a bitter pill of it.

*Lady Conf.* But the pill was gilded for you. My fortune, I take it, has paid off the old family mortgage on your estate.

*Sir Bask.* And at the rate you go on, a new mortgage will swallow up my estate.—I see you are an ungrateful woman.

*Lady Conf.* That is, as you keep the account.

*Sir Bask.* And my accounts will shew it. Day after day nothing but extravagance to gratify your vanity. Did not I go into parliament to please you? Did not I go down to the Borough of Smoke-and-Sot, and get drunk there for a whole month together? Did not I get mobbed at the George and Vulture? and pelted and horse-whipped the day before the election? And was not I obliged to steal out of the town in a rabbit-cart? And all this to be somebody, as you call it? Did not I stand up in the House to make a speech, to shew what an orator you had married? And did not I expose myself? Did I know whether I stood upon my head or my heels for half an hour together? And did not a great man from the Treasury-bench tell me never to speak again?

*Lady Conf.* And why not take his advice?

*Sir Bask.* What in the name of common sense had I to do in Parliament? My country! what's my country to me? the debts of the nation, and your gaming debts are nothing to me. I must help to pay both, must I? I can vote against taxes, and I can advertise in the Gazette to secure me from your extravagance. I have not lived in the Temple for nothing.



*Fur.* He slept there, and calls it studying the law.

*Sir Bask.* Hold you your tongue, Mrs. Pert: leave the room. Go both about your business.

[*Exeunt Furnish and Sideboard.*]

[*Aside.*] I have kept it up before my servants.

[*Looks at Lady Constant.*] She is a fine woman after all.

*Lady Conf.* Is there never to be an end of this usage, sir? Am I to be for ever made unhappy by your humours?

*Sir Bask.* Humours! good sense and sound judgment, in the fine lady's dictionary, are to be called humours?

*Lady Conf.* And your humours are now grown insupportable.

*Sir Bask.* Your profusion is insupportable. At the rate you go on, how am I to find money for my next election?—If you would but talk this matter over coolly—She talks like an angel, and I wish I could say [*Aside.*] the same of myself.—What will the world think?—Only command your temper—what will they think, If I am seen to encourage your way of life?

*Lady Conf.* Amuse yourself that way, sir.—Avoid one error, and run into the opposite extreme.

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside.*] There; a translation from Horace! *Dum vitant stulti vitia*—She is a notable woman.

*Lady Conf.* Let me tell you, there is not in life a more ridiculous sight than the person who

guards, with imaginary wisdom, against one giant-vice, and leaves himself open to a million of absurdities.

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside.*] I am nothing to her in argument—she has a tongue that can reason me out of my senses.—I could almost find it in my heart to tell her the whole truth.—You know, my Lady Constant, that when you want any thing in reason——

*Lady Conf.* Is it unreasonable to live with decency? Is it unreasonable to keep the company my rank and education have entitled me to? Is it unreasonable to conform to the modes of life, when your fortune can so well afford it?

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside.*] She is a very reasonable woman, and I wish I had but half her sense.—You know I am good-natured in the main, and if a sum of money within a moderate compass—If a brace of hundreds—[*Aside.*] why should not I make it three?—I know that you have contracted habits of life, and [*In a softened tone.*] habit, I know, is not easily conquered: and if three [*Smiling.*] hundred pounds will prevent disputes, why [*Smiling.*] as to the matter of three hundred pound——

*Enter FURNISH, with a Band-box.*

*Fur.* Your ladyship's things from the milliner's.

*Sir Bask.* Death and Fury! this woman has overheard me. Three hundred pounds, madam! [*In a violent passion.*] let me tell you that three hun-

dred pounds—what right have you to shovel away three hundred pounds?

*Lady Conf.* Why does the man fly out into such a passion?

*Sir Bash.* I will allow no such doings in my house. Don't I often come when my hall is besieged with a parcel of powder-monkey servants? And did not I the other day, before I could get into my own doors, entangle myself among the chairmen's poles, and was not I confined there, like a man in the stocks?

*Lady Conf.* Why would you be so awkward?

*Sir Bash.* An eternal scene of routs and drums. Have not I seen you put the fee simple of a score of my best acres upon a single card? And have not I muttered to myself, 'if that woman was as much in love with me as she is with Pam, what an excellent wife she would make?'

*Lady Conf.* Pam is very obliging: why won't you strive to be as agreeable?

*Sir Bash.* 'Sdeath, madam, you are so fond of play, that I should not wonder to see my next child marked on the forehead with a pair royal of aces.

*Fur.* I am sure you deserve to be marked on the forehead with a pair of—

*Sir Bash.* Malapert huffey! do you meddle? Begone this moment. [Exit Furnish.]

*Lady Conf.* Fy upon it, Sir Bashful! I am tired of blushing for you.

*Sir Bash.* I am afraid I have gone too far: she is ashamed of me. [Aside.]

*Lady Conf.* You agreed to a separation the other day, and there remains nothing but to execute articles, and make an end to all this disquiet.

*Sir Bask.* A separate maintainance will go but a little way to answer the bawling of milliners, mercers, jewellers, and gaming debts.

*Lady Conf.* It will purchase content, and nothing can obtain that under your roof.

*Sir. Bask. [Aside.]* I have shot my bolt too far—I fancy, my Lady Constant, that you don't know me. We might explain matters, and—'sdeath! *[Aside.]* I am going to blab—I say, madam, if you understood me rightly—as to the authority of a husband, I might, perhaps, be brought to give it up, in part at least; and if nobody was the wiser, I might connive—Po! confusion! interrupted again by that—

*Enter FURNISH.*

*Fur.* A servant from Mrs. Lovemore, madam, to know—

*Sir Bask.* The authority of a husband I never will give up.—

*Lady Conf.* A storm, a whirlwind is fitter to converse with.

*Sir Bask.* I will storm like a whirlwind in my own house. I have done, madam; you are an ungovernable woman—*[Aside and smiling.]* she is a charming woman, and if nobody saw it, I would let her govern me with all my heart. *[Exit.]*

*Lady Conf.* Did any body ever see such behaviour?

*Fur.* Never; and how your ladyship bears it, I can't tell.

*Lady Conf.* That it should be my fate to be married to such a quicksand! What does Mrs. Lovemore say?

*Fur.* If your ladyship will be at home, she intends to do herself the pleasure of waiting upon you, madam.

*Lady Conf.* Very well; I shall be at home. Upon recollection, I want to see her. Let the servant wait: I'll write an answer. *[Exit.*

## SCENE II.

*Another Apartment. Enter Sir BASHFUL and LOVEMORE.*

*Sir Bash.* Walk in, Mr. Lovemore, walk in. I am heartily glad to see you. This is kind.

*Love.* I am ready, you see, to attend the call of friendship.

*Sir Bash.* Mr. Lovemore, you are a friend indeed.

*Love.* You do me honour, Sir Bashful. And your lady, how does she do?

*Sir Bash.* Perfectly well: in great spirits. *[Smiling at Lovemore.]* I never saw her look better: but we have had t'other skirmish since I saw you.

*Love.* Another?



*Sir Bash.* Ay, another; and I did not bate her an ace. She is a rare one to argue. She is fit to discuss a point with any man.—Nobody like her. Wit at will. I thought I managed the dispute, and that I should soon have had her at what you call a *non-plus*. But no, no; no such thing; she can give you a sharp turn in a moment.

*Love.* Ay!

*Sir Bash.* Give her her due, I am nothing to her. I thought I had her fast, but she went round me quick as lightning; and would you believe it? [*Looks highly pleased.*] She did not leave me a word to say.

*Love.* Well! that was hard upon you.

*Sir Bash.* No, not hard at all. Those little victories I don't mind. You know I told you I had something for your private ear. Have you observed nothing odd and singular in me?

*Love.* Not in the least. In the whole circle of my acquaintance I know nobody so little tinged with oddity.

*Sir Bash.* What, have you seen nothing? [*Laughs.*] Have you remarked nothing particular in regard to my wife?

*Love.* Why, you don't live happy with her: but that is not a singular case.

*Sir Bash.* But I tell you—this must be in confidence—I am, at the bottom, a very odd fellow.

*Love.* You do yourself injustice, Sir Bashful.

*Sir Bash.* No, not in the least. It is too true—I am in the main a very odd fellow; I am in—

deed; as odd a fish as lives; and you must have seen it before now.

*Love.* I see it!—I am not apt to spy defects in my friends. What can this be? You are not jealous, I hope?

*Sir Bash.* You have not hit the right nail on the head. No, not jealous. Do her justice, I am safe as to that point. My lady has high notions of honour. No, it is not that.

*Love.* Not a ray of light to guide me: explain, Sir Bashful.

*Sir Bash.* [*Smiling at him.*] You could never have imagined it. But first let me shut this door.

*Love.* What whim has got possession of him now?

*Sir Bash.* Mr. Lovemore, I have great dependence upon you. I am going to make a discovery—I blush at the very thought of it.

[*Turns away.*]

*Love.* Be a man, Sir Bashful; out with it at once; let me advise you.

*Sir Bash.* The very thing I want. The affair is—but then if he should betray me!—Mr. Lovemore, I doubt you, and yet esteem you. Some men there are, who, when a confidence is reposed in them, take occasion from thence to hold a hand over their friend, and tyrannize him all the rest of his days.

*Love.* O fy! this is ungenerous. True friendship is of another quality: it feels from sympathy; honour is the active principle; and the strictest secrecy is an inviolable rule.

*Sir Bask.* Mr. Lovemore, I have no further doubt—stay; did not you hear a noise? Don't I see a shadow moving under the bottom of that door? [*Goes to the door.*]

*Love.* What has got into his head?

*Sir Bask.* [*Looking out.*] Servants have a way of listening.

*Love.* Rank jealousy! he has it through the very brain!

*Sir Bask.* No, no; all's safe. Mr. Lovemore, I will make you the depositary, the faithful depositary of a secret: let it pass from the bottom of my heart to the inmost recess of yours: there let it rest concealed from every prying eye.—My inclination—There—I see a laugh already forming in every feature of your face.

*Love.* Then my face is no true index of the mind. Were you to know the agitations in which you keep me by this suspense—

*Sir Bask.* I believe it. To make an end at once, my inclinations are totally changed—no, not changed, but they are not what they seemed to be. Love is the passion that possesses me—I am in love, and—[*Turns from him.*] and I am ashamed of myself.

*Love.* Ashamed! love is a noble passion: but don't let me hear any more about it. Lady Constant will discover all, and then the blame will fall on me. If your heart revolts from her, don't let me be thought in league with you. You need not involve me in a quarrel with her ladyship.

*Sir Bash.* You don't take me right. You are wide, quite wide of the mark. Hear me out.

*Love.* No, no more. You must excuse me.

*Sir Bash.* You shall hear me. The object of my passion, this charming woman, whom I dote on to distraction——

*Love.* Your pardon; I won't hear it—[*Walks away from him.*] When her ladyship hears of his gallantry, the devil is in the dice, if the spirit of revenge does not mould her to my purposes.

*Sir Bash.* [*Following Lovemore.*] I say, Mr. Lovemore, this adorable creature——

*Love.* Keep your secret, Sir Bashful. [*Avoiding him.*]

*Sir Bash.* [*Following him.*] Who looks so lovely in my eyes——

*Love.* Well; I don't desire to know her.

*Sir Bash.* You do know her. [*Following him.*] This idol of my heart is my own wife.

*Love.* [*Stares at him.*] Your own wife?

*Sir Bash.* Yes, my own wife. [*Looks silly, and turns away.*] 'Tis all over with me: I am undone.

*Love.* This is the most unexpected discovery.

*Sir Bash.* Look ye there now; he laughs at me already.

*Love.* [*Aside.*] His wife must not know this. The grass is cut under my feet if she ever hears a word of it.

*Sir Bash.* [*Aside.*] He is struck with amazement, and does not say a word to me.

*Love.* [*Aside.*] I must not encourage him.—— And can this be possible, Sir Bashful?—In love with your own wife?

*Sir Bafb.* Spare my confusion. I have made myself very ridiculous. [*Looks at him; and turns away.*] I know I have.

*Love.* Ridiculous! Far from it. Can it be wrong to love a valuable woman? Not to feel the impressions of beauty and of merit were downright insensibility; but then we should always admire with discretion. The folly of us married men consists in letting our wives perceive the vehemence with which we love; and the consequence is, we are enslaved for the rest of our lives.—I could trust you with a secret, which, perhaps, would keep you in countenance. Could you imagine it? I love my wife.

*Sir Bafb.* How?

*Love.* I am in love with my wife.

*Sir Bafb.* Oh! no, no;—hey! [*Looking highly pleased.*] you make me laugh. You don't love her, do you?

*Love.* Passionately, tenderly; with all the ardour of affection.

*Sir Bafb.* Give me your hand. Ha! ha—I did not expect this. This is some relief. Ha! ha!—you have made me happy. And have you led the life you have done all this time, on purpose to conceal your regard from her?

*Love.* For that very purpose. I esteem her; I love her; but I would not have her know it.

*Sir Bafb.* No!

*Love.* Upon no consideration; nor would I have the world know it.

*Sir Bafb.* Perfectly right.



*Love.* To be sure. Tell your wife that you esteem her good qualities, and admire her person, she cries *viſtoria*, falls to plundering, and then you muſt either break her chain, or wear it in the face of the world, a laughing-stock for all your acquaintance.

*Sir Baſb.* That is what I have always been afraid of.

*Love.* Not without reaſon. The world delights in ridicule. Do you know, if our ſecrets were to tranſpire, that we ſhould have nothing but wit, and raillery, and fleers, and taunts flying about our ears?

*Sir Baſb.* But I have taken good care. I have quarrelled with my lady ten times a day on purpoſe to cloak the affair, and prevent all ſuſpicion.

*Love.* Admirable! I commend your prudence. Beſides,—my Lady Conſtant, you know, has ſome youthful vigour about her; a graceful perſon, and an eye that inflames deſire; and deſire at your time of life, you know——

*Sir Baſb.* Po! it is not for that; that is nothing. I wear admirably well, Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* Do you?

*Sir Baſb.* As young as ever: but I don't let her know it.

*Love.* Well! if you are diſcreet in that point, you are a very Machiavel!

*Sir Baſb.* Yes, yes; I fight cunning. [*Laughs.*]

*Love.* Let nothing betray you. Be upon your guard: that is my own plan exactly. You want no advice from me.

*Sir Bash.* Pardon me: you can assist me.—My dear brother sufferer, give me your hand. We can in a fly way be of great use to each other.

*Love.* As how?

*Sir Bash.* I'll tell you. There are some things which you know our wives expect to be done.

*Love.* So there are.—[*Aside.*] What the devil is he at now?

*Sir Bash.* Now if you'll assist me——

*Love.* You may depend upon my assistance.

*Sir Bash.* Thus it is: my wife, you know, keeps a power of company, and makes a great figure there. I could shew her in any company in England: I wish she could say the same of me.

*Love.* Why truly I wish she could.

*Sir Bash.* But that's out of the question. Now if you will come into my scheme—It must be a deep secret—How? Is that Sir Brilliant's voice?

*Enter Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Sir Bril.* Sir Bashful, you see what attraction you have. Lovemore, I did not expect to see you here.

*Love.* Nor did I expect you, Sir Brilliant. [*Aside.*

*Sir Bash.* Confusion—this unseasonable visit—  
[*Aside.*

*Sir Bril.* And your lady, is she at home, Sir Bashful?

*Sir Bash.* Her own people keep that account, sir: I know nothing of her.

*Sir Bril.* Nay, never talk slightly of a lady

who possesses so many elegant accomplishments. She has spirit, sense, wit, and beauty.

*Sir Bash.* Spirit, sense, wit, and beauty! she has them all, sure enough.—Sir, I am no sworn appraiser, to take an inventory of her effects.—

[*Aside.*] Hey, Lovemore! [*Looks at him and laughs.*]

*Love.* [*To Sir Bashful.*] Vastly well.

*Sir Bril.* Is her ladyship visible this morning?

*Sir Bash.* Whether she is visible, or not, is no business of mine, but I know she is unintelligible this morning, and incomprehensible this morning. She has the vapours; but your conversation, I suppose, will brighten her up for the rest of the day.

*Sir Bril.* Why, as it happens, I have the rarest piece of news to communicate to her. Lovemore, you know Sir Amorous la Fool?

*Love.* He that was sheriff the other day? Came up with an address, and got himself knighted?

*Sir Bril.* The same. He declared he would live with his friends upon the same familiar footing as before, and his new dignities should make no alteration.

*Sir Bash.* I have seen the knight. What of him?

*Sir Bril.* Poor devil. He is in such a scrape!

*Sir Bash.* What's the matter? Bubbled at play, I suppose.

*Sir Bril.* Worse, much worse.

*Love.* He has been blackballed at one of the clubs?

*Sir Bash.* Or run through the body in a duel?

*Sir Bril.* Why that's a scrape indeed; but it is not that.

*Sir Bash.* What then?

*Sir Bril.* So unfortunate a discovery; he is fallen in love—I cannot help laughing at him.

*Love.* Po! fallen in love with some coquette, who plays off her airs, and makes a jest of him.

*Sir Bash.* A young actress may be, or an opera singer?

*Sir Bril.* No, you will never guess. Sir Bashful,—like a silly devil, he is fallen in love with his own wife.

*Sir Bash.* Fallen in love with his own wife!

[Stares at him.]

*Sir Bril.* Yes; he has made up all quarrels; his jealousy is at an end, and he is to be upon his good behaviour for the rest of his life.—Could you expect this, Lovemore?

*Love.* No, Sir; neither I, nor my friend, Sir Bashful, expected this.

*Sir Bash.* It is a stroke of surprise to me.

[Looking uneasy.]

*Sir Bril.* I heard it at my Lady Betty Scandal's, and we had such a laugh; the whole company were in astonishment: whist stood still, quadrille laid down the cards, and brag was in suspense. Poor Sir Amorous! it is very ridiculous, is not it, Sir Bashful?

*Sir Bash.* Very ridiculous indeed.—[Aside.] My own case exactly, and my friend Lovemore's too.

*Sir Bril.* The man is lost, undone, ruined, dead and buried.

*Love.* [Laughing.] He will never be able to shew his face after this discovery.

*Sir Bril.* Oh, never; 'tis all over with him. *Sir Bashful*, this does not divert you; you don't enjoy it.

*Sir Bash.* Who I?—I—I—nothing can be more pleasant, and—I—laugh as heartily as I possibly can. [Forcing a laugh.]

*Sir Bril.* Lovemore, you remember *Sir Amorous* used to strut, and talk big, and truly he did not care a pinch of snuff for his wife, not he; pretended to be as much at ease as *Sir Bashful* about his lady, and as much his own master as you yourself, or any man of pleasure about town.

*Love.* I remember him: but as to *Sir Bashful* and myself, we know the world, we understand life.

*Sir Bash.* So we do; the world will never have such a story of us. Will they, Lovemore?

*Love.* Oh! we are free: we are out of the scrape.

*Sir Bril.* *Sir Amorous* la Fool will be a proverb. Adieu for him the side-box whisper, the soft affliction, and all the joys of freedom. He is retired with his *Penelope* to love one another in the country; and next winter they will come to town to hate one another.

*Sir Bash.* Do you think it will end so?

*Sir Bril.* No doubt of it. That is always the *dénouement* of modern matrimony. But I have not told you the worst of his case. Our friend, *Sir Charles Wildfire*, you know, was writing a comedy, and what do you think he has done? He has drawn the character of *Sir Amorous*, and made him the hero of the play.

*Sir Bash.* What, put him into a comedy?



*Sir Bril.* Even so: it is called 'The Amorous Husband; or, The man in Love with his own Wife.' Oh! oh! oh! oh!

*Love.* We must fend in time for places.

[Laughs with *Sir Brilliant*.

*Sir Bash.* Lovemore carries it with an air. [Aside.

*Sir Bril.* Yes, we must secure places. *Sir Bashful*, you shall be of the party.

*Sir Bash.* The party will be very agreeable. I shall enjoy the joke prodigiously. Ha! ha!

[Forces a laugh.

*Love.* Yes, *Sir Bashful*, we shall relish the humour.

[Looks at him, and laughs.

*Sir Bril.* The play will have a run: the people of fashion will crowd after such a character.—I must drive to a million of places and put it about; but first, with your leave, *Sir Bashful*, I will take the liberty to give a hint of the affair to your lady. It will appear so ridiculous to her.

*Sir Bash.* Do you think it will?

*Sir Bril.* Without doubt: she has never met with any thing like it: has she, Lovemore?

*Love.* I fancy not: *Sir Bashful*, you take care of that.

*Sir Bash.* Yes, yes; I shall never be the town-talk.—Hey, Lovemore!

*Sir Bril.* Well, I'll step and pay my respects to my Lady Constant. Poor *Sir Amorous*! he will have his horns added to his coat of arms in a little time. Ha! ha!

[Exit.

*Sir Bash.* There, you see how it is. I shall get lampooned, be-rhymed, and nixed into a comedy.

*Love.* Po! never be frightened at this. Nobody knows of your weakness but myself, and I can't betray your secret for my own sake.

*Sir Bask.* Very true.

*Love.* This discovery shews the necessity of concealing our loves. We must act with caution. Give my lady no reason to suspect that you have the least regard for her.

*Sir Bask.* Not for the world.

*Love.* Keep to that.

*Sir Bask.* I have done her a thousand kindnesses, but all by stealth; all in a sly way.

*Love.* Have you?

*Sir Bask.* Oh! a multitude. I'll tell you. She has been plaguing me a long time for an addition to her jewels. She wants a diamond cross, and a better pair of diamond buckles. Madam, says I, I will have no such trumpery; but then goes I and bespeaks them of the first jeweller in town.—All under the rose. The buckles are finished: worth five hundred! She will have them this very day, without knowing from what quarter they come—I can't but laugh at the contrivance—the man that brings them will run away directly, without saying a word. [Laughs heartily.]

*Love.* Sly, sly.—You know what you are about.

*Sir Bask.* Ay, let me alone—[Laughs with Love-more.] And then, to cover the design still more, when I see her wear her baubles, I can take occasion to be as jealous as bedlam.

*Love.* So you can: ha! ha!—[Aside.] I wish he may never be jealous of me in good earnest.

*Sir Bask.* Give me your hand. [*Looks at him, and laughs.*] I am safe, I think.

*Love.* [*Laughing with him.*] Perfectly safe—  
[*Aside.*] if it was not for his own folly.

*Sir Bask.* But I was telling you, Mr. Lovemore:—we can be of essential use to each other.

*Love.* As how, pray?

*Sir Bask.* Why, my lady is often in want of money. It would be ridiculous in me to supply her. Now if you will take the money from me, and pretend to lend it to her, out of friendship, you know——

*Love.* Nothing can be better—[*Aside.*] Here is a fellow pimping for his own horns.—I shall be glad to serve you.

*Sir Bask.* I am for ever obliged to you—here, here; take it now—here it is in bank-notes—one, two, three; there is three hundred—give her that, and tell her you have more at her service to-morrow or next day, if her occasions require it.

*Love.* My good friend, to oblige you. [*Takes the money.*] This is the rarest adventure!

*Sir Bask.* I'll do any thing for you in return.

*Love.* I shall have occasion for your friendship—that is to forgive me, if you find me out. [*Aside.*

*Sir Bask.* Lose no time; step to her now—hold, hold; Sir Brilliant is with her.

*Love.* I can dismiss him. Rely upon my friendship: I will make her ladyship easy for you.

*Sir Bask.* It will be kind of you.

*Love.* It shall be her own fault if I don't.

*Sir Bask.* A thousand thanks to you—well, is not this the rarest project?

*Love.* It is the newest way—of satisfying a man's wife!

*Sir Bask.* Ay! let this head of mine alone.

*Love.* [*Aside.*] Not if I can help it. Hush!—I hear Sir Brilliant; he is coming down stairs. I'll take this opportunity, and step to her ladyship now.

*Sir Bask.* Do so, do so.

*Love.* I am gone. [*Aside.*] Who can blame me now if I cuckold this fellow? [*Exit.*]

*Sir Bask.* Prosper you, prosper you, Mr. Love-more. Make me thankful; he is a true friend. I don't know what I should do without him.

*Enter Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Sir Brill.* Sir Baskful, how have you managed this?

*Sir Bask.* I have no art, no management. What's the matter?

*Sir Brill.* I don't know what you have done, but your lady laughs till she is ready to expire at what I have been telling her.

*Sir Bask.* And she thinks Sir Amorous la Fool an object of ridicule?

*Sir Brill.* She does not give credit to a single syllable of the story. A man that loves his wife would be a Phoenix indeed! Such a thing might exist formerly, but in this polished age is no where to be found. That's her opinion of the matter.

*Sir Bask.* [*Laughs.*] A whimsical notion of hers! and so she thinks you may go about with a lantern to find a man that sets any value upon his wife?

*Sir Brill.* You have managed to convince her of it. How the devil do you contrive to govern so fine a woman? I know several, without her pretensions,

who have long ago thrown off all restraint. You keep up your dignity.

*Sir Bash.* Yes, I know what I am about.

*Sir Bril.* You!—you are quite in the fashion.—Apropos; I fancy I shall want you to afford me your assistance. You know my Lady Charlotte Modelove? She has a taste for the theatre: at Bell-Grove Place she has an elegant stage, where her select friends amuse themselves now and then with a representation of certain comic pieces. We shall there act the new comedy, but we apprehend some difficulty in the arrangement of the several characters. Now you shall act Sir Amorous, and——

*Sir Bash.* I act, fir!—I know nothing of the character.

*Sir Bril.* Po! say nothing of that. In time you may reach the ridiculous absurdity of it, and play it as well as another.

*Sir Bash.* [*Aside.*] Confusion! he does not suspect, I hope—divert yourselves, fir, as you may; but not at my expence I promise you.

*Sir Bril.* Never be so abrupt. Who knows but Lady Constant may be the happy wife, the *Cara Sposa* of the piece! and then, you in love with her; and she laughing at you for it, will give a zest to the humour, which every body will relish in the most exquisite degree.

*Sir Bash.* Po! this is too much. You are very pleasant, but you won't easily get me to play the fool.

*Sir Bril.* Well, consider of it. I shall be delighted to see my friend Sir Bashful tied to his wife's apron-string, and with a languishing look melting



away in admiration of her charms. Oh, ho, ho, ho!  
—adieu; *a l'honneur*; good morning, Sir Bashful.

[Exit.

*Sir Bash.* I don't know what to make of all this. But there is no danger. As long as nobody knows it, I may venture to love my wife. There will be no harm while the secret is kept close as night, concealed in tenfold darkness, from the wits and scoffers of the age.

*Enter LOVEMORE.*

*Sir Bash.* Well, well!—how? what have you done?

*Love.* As I could wish: she is infinitely obliged to me, and will never forget the civility.

*Sir Bash.* A thousand thanks to you. I am not suspected?

*Love.* She has not a distant idea of you in this business. She was rather delicate at first, and hesitated, and thought it an indecorum to accept of money even from a friend. But that objection soon vanished. I told her, it is but too visible that she is unfortunately yoked with a husband, whose humour will never be softened down to the least compliance with her inclinations.

*Sir Bash.* That was well said, and had a good effect, I hope.

*Love.* I hope so too.

*Sir Bash.* It helps to carry on the plot, you know.

*Love.* Admirably; it puts things in the train I wish.

*Sir Bask.* And so, to cover the design, you gave me the worst of characters?

*Love.* I painted you in terrible colours.

*Sir Bask.* Do so always, and she will never suspect me of being privy to any civility you may shew her.

*Love.* I would not have you know any thing of my civility to her for the world. [*Aside.*] I have succeeded thus far. I talked a few musty sentences, such as the person who receives a civility confers the obligation, with more jargon to that purpose, and so with some reluctance she complied at last, and things are now upon the footing I would have them.—Death and fury! there comes my wife.

*Sir Bask.* Ay, and here comes my wife.

*Love.* What the devil brings her hither?

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside.*] Now, now; now let me see how he will carry it before Mrs. Lovemore.—Walk in, Madam! walk in, Mrs. Lovemore.

*Enter Mrs. Lovemore, and Lady Constant, at opposite doors.*

*Lady Conf.* Mrs. Lovemore, to see you abroad is a novelty indeed.

*Mrs. Love.* As great, perhaps, as that of finding your ladyship at home. Mr. Lovemore, I did not expect to have the pleasure of meeting you.

*Love.* Then we are both agreeably surprised.

*Sir Bask.* Now mind how he behaves. [*Aside.*

*Mrs. Love.* I thought you were gone to your city-banker.

*Love.* And you find that you are mistaken. I

have deferred it till the evening—[*Aside.*] 'Sdeath! to be teased in this manner.

*Sir Bash.* [*Aside.*] No, no; he won't drop the mask. [*Looks at Lady Constant.*] She has touched the cash; I can see the bank-notes sparkling in her eyes.

*Mrs. Love.* If you don't go into the city till the evening, may I hope for your company at dinner, Mr. Lovemore?

*Love.* The question is entertaining, but as it was settled this morning, I think it has lost the graces of novelty.

*Sir Bash.* He won't let her have the least suspicion of his regard. [*Aside.*]

*Lady Conf.* I dare say Mr. Lovemore will dine at home, if it conduces to your happiness, ma'am; and Sir Bashful, I take it, will dine at home for the contrary reason.

*Sir Bash.* Madam, I will dine at home, or I will dine abroad, for what reason I please, and it is my pleasure, to give no reason for either.—Lovemore!

[*Looks at him and smiles.*]

*Love.* [*Aside to Sir Bashful.*] Bravo!—What a block-head it is!

*Mrs. Love.* As you have your chariot at the door, Mr. Lovemore, if you have no objection, I will send away my chair, and you may do me the honour of a place in your carriage.

*Love.* The honour will be very great to me, but—so many places to call at.—If I had known this sooner—You had better keep your chair.

*Sir Bash.* [*Aside.*] Cunning! cunning! he would

not be seen in his chariot with her for the world. He has more discretion than I have.

*Lady Conf.* Mrs. Lovemore, since you have, at last, ventured to come abroad, I hope you will think it a change for the better. You are too domestic. I shall expect now to see you often: and apropos, I am to have a route to-morrow evening; if you will do me the honour of your company——

*Sir Bash.* A route to-morrow evening! you have a route every evening, I think. Learn of Mrs. Lovemore; imitate her example, and don't let me have your hurricane months all the year round in my house.—Hip! [*Aside.*] Lovemore, how do you like me?

*Love.* [*Aside to Sir Bashful.*] You improve upon it every time. But I am loitering here as if I had nothing to do.—My Lady Constant, I have the honour to wish your ladyship a good morning. Sir Bashful, yours—madam.

[*Bows gravely to Mrs. Lovemore, hums a tune, and exit.*]

*Sir Bash.* [*Aside.*] He knows how to play the game. I'll try what I can do. Mrs. Lovemore, I have the honour to wish you a good morning. Madam——[*Bows gravely to Lady Constant, hums a tune, and exit.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Two such husbands!

*Lady Conf.* As to my swain, I grant you: Mr. Lovemore is, at least, well-bred; he has an understanding, and may, in time, reflect. Sir Bashful never qualifies himself with the smallest tincture of civility.

*Mrs. Love.* If civility can qualify the draught, I must allow Mr. Lovemore to have a skilful hand. But there is no end to his projects. Every day opens a new scene. Another of his intrigues is come to light. I came to consult with your ladyship. I know you are acquainted with the Widow Bellmour.

*Lady Conf.* The Widow Bellmour! I know her perfectly well.

*Mrs. Love.* Not so well, perhaps, as you may imagine. She has thrown out the lure for my wild gallant, and in order to deceive me—

*Lady Conf.* My dear, you must be mistaken. Who tells you this?

*Mrs. Love.* Oh! I can trust to my intelligence. Sir Brilliant Fashion, by way of blind to me, has been this morning drawing so amiable a picture of the lady—

*Lady Conf.* Sir Brilliant's authority is not always the best, but in this point you may trust to him.

*Mrs. Love.* But when you have heard all the circumstances—

*Lady Conf.* Depend upon it you are wrong. I know the Widow Bellmour. Her turn of character, and way of thinking—

*Mrs. Love.* Excuse me, madam. You decide without hearing me.

*Lady Conf.* All scandal, take my word for it. However, let me hear your story. We'll adjourn to my dressing-room, if you will; and I promise to confute all you can say.—I would have you know the Widow Bellmour: you will be in love with her.—My dear madam, have not you a tinge of jea-



lously?—Beware of that malady. If you see things  
through that medium, I shall give you up.

*That jaundice of the mind, whose colours strike  
On friend and foe, and paint them all alike.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

*An Apartment at the Widow BELLMOUR'S: several  
Chairs, a Toilette, a Book-Case, and a Harpsichord,  
disposed up and down.*

*Mignonet. [Putting things in order.]*

I DON'T well know what to make of this same  
Lord Etheridge. He is coming here again to-day,  
I suppose: all this neatness, and all this care must  
be for him.—Well, it does not signify: [*Arrang-  
ing the chairs.*] there is a pleasure in obeying  
Madam Bellmour. She is a sweet lady, that's the  
truth of it.—'Twere a pity if any of these men,  
with their deceitful arts, should draw her into a  
snare.—But she knows them all. They must rise  
early who can outwit her. [*Settling the toilette.*]

*Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR, reading.*

*Oh! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray  
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;  
She who can own a sister's charms, and hear  
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear;  
That never answers till a husband cools,  
And if she rules him, never shows she rules.*

Sensible, elegant Pope!

*Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,  
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys.*

*[Seems to read on.]*

*Mign.* Lord love my mistress! always so charming, so gay, and so happy!

*Mrs. Bell.* These exquisite characters of women! they are a sort of painter's gallery, where one sees the portraits of all one's acquaintance, and sometimes we see our own features too. Mignonet, put this book in its place.

*Mign.* Yes, ma'am; and there's your toilette looks as elegant as hands can make it.

*Mrs. Bell.* Does it? I think it does. You have some taste. Apropos, where is my new song?—Oh here it is: I must make myself mistress of it. [*Plays upon the harpsichord, and sings a little.*] I believe I have conquered it. [*Rises and goes to her toilette.*] This hair is always tormenting me, always in disorder: this lock must be for ever gadding out of its place. I must and will subdue it.—Do you know, Mignonet, that this is a pretty song? It was writ by my Lord Etheridge. My lord has a turn. [*Sings a little.*] I must be perfect before he comes. [*Hums the tune.*] Do you know that I think my lord is one of those men who may be endured?

*Mign.* Yes, ma'am, I know you think so.

*Mrs. Bell.* Do you?

*Mign.* And if I have any skill, ma'am, you are not without a little partiality for his lordship.

*Mrs. Bell.* Really? Then you think I like him, perhaps. Do you think I like him? I don't well know how that is. Like him! no, not absolutely: it is not decided: and yet I don't know, if I had a mind to humour myself, and to give way a little to

inclination, there is something here in my heart that would be busy, I believe.—The man has a softness of manner, a turn of wit, and does not want sentiment. Can I call it sentiment? Yes, I think I may. He has sentiment; and then he knows the manners, the usage of the world, and he points out the ridicule of things with so much humour?

*Mign.* You'll be caught, ma'am, I see that.—To be sure, my lord has a quality-air, and can make himself agreeable. But what of that? You know but very little of him. Is a man's character known in three or four weeks time? [*Mrs. Bellmour hums a tune.*] Do, my dear madam, mind what I say: I am at times very confiderate. I make my remarks, and I see very plainly—Lord, ma'am, what am I doing? I am talking to you for your own good, and you are all in the air, and no more mind me, no, no more than if I was nothing at all.

*Mrs. Bell.* [*Continues humming a tune.*] You talk wonderfully well upon the subject; but as I know how the cards lie, and can play the best of the game; and as I have a song to amuse me, one is inclined to give musical nonsense the preference.

*Mign.* I assure you, ma'am, I am not one of those servants, that bargain for their mistress's inclinations: but you are going to take a leap in the dark. What does my Lord Etheridge mean, with his chair always brought into the hall, and the curtains close about his ears? Why does not he come like himself, and not care who sees him. There's some mystery at the bottom, I'll be sworn there is; and

so you'll find at last.—Dear heart, ma'am, if you are determined not to listen, what signifies my living with you? At this rate, I am of no service to you.

*Mrs. Bell.* There;—I have conquered my song —[*Runs to her glass.*] How do I look to-day? The eyes do well enough, I think.—And so, Mignonet, you imagine I shall play the fool, and marry my Lord Etheridge?

*Mign.* You have it through the very heart of you: I see that.

*Mrs. Bell.* Do you?—I don't know what to say to it. Poor Sir Brilliant Fashion! if I prefer his rival, what will become of him?—I won't think about it.

*Enter POMPEY.*

*Mrs. Bell.* What's the matter, Pompey?

*Pom.* A lady in a chair desires to know if your ladyship is at home?

*Mrs. Bell.* Has the lady no name?

*Pom.* Yes; I fancies she has, ma'am; but she did not tell it.

*Mrs. Bell.* How awkward!—well, shew the lady up stairs.

*Mign.* Had not you better receive her in the drawing-room, ma'am? I have not half done my business here.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh! you have done very well. There will be less formality here. I dare say it is some intimate acquaintance, though that foolish boy does not recollect her name. Here she comes. I don't know her.

*Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE.*

*Mrs. Love.* [*Disconcerted.*] I beg pardon for this intrusion.

*Mrs. Bell.* Pray walk in, ma'am. Mignionet, reach a chair. [*Mrs. Lovemore crosses the stage, and they salute each other with an air of distant civility.*]

*Mrs. Love.* I am afraid this visit from one who has not the honour of knowing you——

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh, make no apology, ma'am.—— Mignionet, you may withdraw. [*Exit Mignionet.*]

*Mrs. Love.* It may appear extraordinary that a stranger thus intrudes upon you;—but a particular circumstance determined me to take this liberty. I hope you will excuse the freedom.

*Mrs. Bell.* You do me honour, ma'am: pray no excuses. A particular circumstance, you say?

*Mrs. Love.* I shall appear, perhaps, very ridiculous, and, indeed, I am afraid I have done the most absurd thing! but a lady of your acquaintance—you know my Lady Constant, ma'am?

*Mrs. Bell.* Extremely well.

*Mrs. Love.* She has given you such an amiable character for benevolence and a certain elegant way of thinking, entirely your own, that I flatter myself, if it is in your power, you will be generous enough to afford me your assistance.

*Mrs. Bell.* Lady Constant is very obliging. Make a trial of me, ma'am, and if I can be of any use——

*Mrs. Love.* I fear I shall ask you a strange question:—are you acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Lovemore?



*Mrs. Bell.* Lovemore? No such name on my list.—Lovemore? No:—I recollect no such person. The circle of my acquaintance is small: I am almost a stranger in town.

*Mrs. Love.* That makes an end, ma'am. I beg your pardon. I have given you an unnecessary trouble. *[Going.*

*Mrs. Bell.* *[Aside.]* Mighty odd this! her manner is interesting.—You have given me no trouble, but my curiosity is excited. *[Takes her by the hand.]* I beg you will keep your chair. Pray be seated.—What can this mean? *[Aside.]* Will you be so good as to inform me who the gentleman is?

*Mrs. Love.* The story will be uninteresting to you, and to me it is painful. My grievances—*[Puts her handkerchief to her eyes.]*

*Mrs. Bell.* *[Aside.]* Her grief affects me. *[Looks at her till she has recovered herself.]* I would not importune too much—

*Mrs. Love.* You have such an air of frankness and generosity, that I will open myself without reserve: I have the tenderest regard for Mr. Lovemore: I have been married to him these two years. I admired his understanding, his sensibility, and his spirit. My heart was his; I loved him with unbounded passion. I thought the flame was mutual, and you may believe I was happy. But of late, there is such a revolution in his temper! I know not what to make of it. I am doomed to be unhappy.

*Mrs. Bell.* Perhaps not: you may still have much in your power.

*Mrs. Love.* My power is at an end. Instead of the looks of affection, and the expressions of tenderness, with which he used to meet me, it is nothing now but cold, averted, superficial civility; while abroad he runs on in a wild career of pleasure, and to my deep affliction, has attached himself entirely to another object.

*Mrs. Bell.* And if I had known Mr. Lovemore, do you imagine that my advice or persuasion would avail you any thing?

*Mrs. Love.* I had such a fancy. [*Aside.*] What can I think of her.

*Mrs. Bell.* You are much mistaken. In these cases friends may interpose, but what can they do? They recommend a wife to the good will, the honour, and generosity of her husband. But when a woman, who should be esteemed and loved, is recommended as an object of compassion, she is humbled indeed: it is all over with her. A wife should recommend herself by the graces of her person, and the variety of her talents. Men will prove false, and if there is nothing in your complaint but mere gallantry on his side, I protest I do not see that your case is so very bad.

*Mrs. Love.* Can it be worse, ma'am?

*Mrs. Bell.* A great deal.—If his affections, instead of being alienated, had been extinguished, what would be the consequence?—A downright, sullen, habitual insensibility. From that lethargy of affection a man is not easily recalled. In all Love's bill of mortality there is not a more fatal disorder. But this is not the case with Mr. Love-

more: by your account, he still has sentiment; and where there is sentiment, there is room to hope for an alteration.—But where the heart has lost its feeling, you have the pain of finding yourself neglected; and for what? The man has grown stupid, and to the warm beams of wit and beauty, as impenetrable as an ice-house.

*Mrs. Love.* That is not my complaint. I have to do with one, who is too susceptible of impressions from every beautiful object that comes in his way.

*Mrs. Bell.* Why, so much the better. A new idea strikes his fancy. He is inconstant, but after wavering and fluttering, he may settle at last.

*Mrs. Love.* How light she makes of it! she apologizes for him! *[Aside.*

*Mrs. Bell.* And, perhaps, the fault is on the woman's side—

*Mrs. Love.* The virtue of my conduct, madam—

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh! I would have laid my life you would be at that work. But virtue is not the question at present. I suppose virtue; that is always understood. The fault I mean, is the want of due attention to the art of pleasing. It is there that most women fail. In these times, virtue may be its own reward. Virtue alone cannot please the taste of the age. It is *la belle nature*, virtue embellished by the advantages of art, that men expect now-a-days. That is the whole affair: I would not make myself uneasy, ma'am.

*Mrs. Love.* Not uneasy, when his indifference does not diminish my regard for him! Not uneasy,

when the man I dote upon, no longer fixes his happiness at home!

*Mrs. Bell.* Give me leave to speak my mind freely. I have observed, when the fiend jealousy is roused, that women lay out a wonderful deal of anxiety and vexation to no account; when, perhaps, if the truth were known, they should be angry with themselves instead of their husbands.

*Mrs. Love.* Angry with myself, madam! Calumny can lay nothing to my charge.

*Mrs. Bell.* There again now! that is the folly of us all.

*Mrs. Love.* And after being married so long, and behaving all the time with such an equality!

*Mrs. Bell.* Ay, that equality is the rock so many split upon. The men will change. Excuse my freedom. They are so immersed in luxury, that they must have eternal variety in their happiness.

*Mrs. Love.* She justifies him! [Aside.]

*Mrs. Bell.* Your case may not be desperate: I would venture to lay a pot of coffee, that the person who now rivals you in your husband's affections, does it without your good qualities, and even without your beauty, by the mere force of agreeable talents, and some skill in the art of pleasing.

*Mrs. Love.* I am afraid that compliment——

*Mrs. Bell.* If I judge right, you are entitled to it. Let me ask you: Do you know this formidable rival?

*Mrs. Love.* There, I own, I am puzzled.

*Mrs. Bell.* What sort of woman is she?

*Mrs. Love.* Formidable indeed! She has been

described to me as one of charming and rare accomplishments.

*Mrs. Bell.* Never throw up the cards for all that. Take my advice, ma'am.—You seem to have qualities that may dispute your husband's heart with any body; but the exertion of those amiable qualities, I fear, may be suppressed. Excuse my frankness. You should counteract your rival by the very arts which she employs against you. I know a lady now in your very situation: and what does she do? She consumes herself with unceasing jealousy; whereas, if she would exert but half the pains she uses in teasing herself, to vie with the person who has won her husband from her; to vie with her, I say, in the art of pleasing—for there it is a woman's pride should be piqued—Would she do that, take my word for it, victory would declare in her favour. You are not without attractions; give them their energy, and you conquer.

*Mrs. Love.* Do you think so, ma'am?

*Mrs. Bell.* Think so! I am sure of it. You must exert yourself. It is the wife's business to bait the hook for her husband with variety. Virtue alone, by her own native charms, would do, if the men were perfect. But it is otherwise, and since vice can assume allurements, why should not truth and innocence have additional ornaments also?

*Mrs. Love.* I find Sir Brilliant told me truth.

[*Aside.*

*Mrs. Bell.* Give me leave, ma'am: I have been married, and am a little in the secret. To win a heart is easy; to keep it is the difficulty. After the



fatal words 'for better, for worse,' women relax into indolence, and while they are guilty of no infidelity, they think every thing safe. But they are mistaken: a great deal is wanting; an address, a vivacity, a desire to please; the agreeable contrast; the sense that pleases, the folly that charms—A favourite poet, PRIOR, has expressed it with delicacy.

*Above the fix'd and settled rules  
Of vice and virtue in the schools,  
The better part should set before 'em  
A grace, a manner, a decorum.*

*Mrs. Love.* But when the natural temper——

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh! the natural temper must be forced. Home must be made a place of pleasure to the husband. How is that to be done? That equality, which you talk of, is a sameness that palls and wearies. A wife should throw infinite variety into her manner. She should, as it were, multiply herself, and be, as it were, fundry different women on different occasions. The tender, the affectionate, the witty, the silent, all in their turns, all shifting the scene, and she succeeding to herself as quick as lightning. And this I take to be the whole mystery: the way to keep a man.—But I beg your pardon. I go on too fast: you will think me the giddiest creature.

*Mrs. Love.* Quite the reverse, ma'am; you are very obliging!——

*Mrs. Bell.* I have tired myself and you too.—

But pray, may I now enquire, who was so kind as to intimate that I am acquainted with Mr. Lovemore?

*Mrs. Love.* It was a mere mistake. I have given you a great deal of trouble. You will excuse my frankness: I had heard that his visits were frequent here.

*Mrs. Bell.* His visits frequent here! My Lady Constant could not tell you so?

*Mrs. Love.* She told me quite the contrary. She knows your amiable qualities, and does you justice.

*Mrs. Bell.* The accident is lucky! it has procured me the honour of your acquaintance. And I suppose you imagined that I had robbed you of Mr. Lovemore's heart?—Scandal will be buzzing about. I can laugh at every thing of that sort. [*A rap at the door.*] Oh! Heavens! some troublesome visit.— [*Rings a bell.*]

*Enter MIGNIONET.*

*Mrs. Bell.* I am not at home. Go, and give an answer.

*Mign.* It is Lord Etheridge, ma'am: he is coming up stairs. The servants did not know you had changed your mind.

*Mrs. Bell.* Was ever any thing so cross? Tell his lordship I have company; I am busy; I am not well; any thing, don't let him come in. Make haste, dispatch: I won't see him.

*Mrs. Love.* I beg I may not hinder you: I shall take my leave.

*Mrs. Bell.* By no means. Our conversation grows interesting. I positively will not see my lord.

*Mrs. Love.* I can't agree to that. You must see his Lordship. I can step into another room.

*Mrs. Bell.* Will you be so good?—You will find something to amuse you in that cabinet. [*Points to a door in the back scene.*] We must talk farther. My lord sha'n't stay long.

*Mrs. Love.* Nay, but if you stand upon ceremony—

*Mrs. Bell.* Very well: I'll contrive it. This is a lover of mine. A lover and a husband are the same thing. Perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him on the stairs. Make haste: Mignionet, shew the way.

[*Mrs. Love. and Mignionet go out at the back scene.*]

*Mrs. Bell.* Let me see how I look to receive him.

[*Runs to her glass.*]

*Enter LOVEMORE, with a Star and Garter, as Lord ETHERIDGE.*

*Love.* A heav'nly image in the glass appears,

To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears,

Repairs her smiles——

*Mrs. Bell.* Repairs her smiles, my lord! You are satirical this morning. Pray, my Lord, are my features out of repair, like an old house in the country, that wants a tenant?

*Love.* Nay, now you wrest my words from their visible intention. You can't suppose that I impute to such perfect beauty the least want of repair,

whatever may be the case, ma'am, with regard to the want of a tenant.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh! then your opinion is, that I want a tenant. And perhaps you think I am going to put up a bill to signify to all passers-by, that here is a mansion to be let, enquire of the Widow Bellmour. I like your notion; I don't think it would be a bad scheme. Shall I try it?

*Love.* A palace needs no such invitation. Its natural beauty attracts admiring eyes. But who can bid up to the price? The person who is able to do it—

*Mrs. Bell.* Will be happy; I know that is what you are going to say. But he must do homage for it: and then I will let it to none but a single gentleman. Do you know any body whom these conditions will suit?

*Love.* Those conditions, ma'am———[*Aside*] What the devil does she mean? I am not detected, I hope.—To be sure, ma'am, those conditions—And—none but single gentlemen will presume to——

*Mrs. Bell.* And then it must be a lease for life. But that will never do; nobody will be troubled with it. I shall never get it off my hands: do you think I shall, my lord?

*Love.* There must be very little taste left, if you have not a number of bidders. You know the ambition of my heart; you know I am devoted to you, upon any terms, even though it were to be bought with life.

*Mrs. Bell.* Heavens! what a dying swain you are! And does your lordship mean to be guilty of matrimony? Lord! what a question have I asked? To be sure, I am the giddiest creature. My lord, don't you think me a strange madcap?

*Love.* A vein of wit, like yours, that springs at once from vivacity and sentiment, serves to exalt your beauty, and give animation to every charm.

*Mrs. Bell.* Upon my word, you have said it finely! But you are in the right, my lord. Your pensive melancholy beauty is the most insipid thing in nature. And yet we often see features without a mind; and the owner of them sits in the room with you, like a mere vegetable, for an hour together, till, at last, she is incited to the violent exertion of, 'Yes, sir'——'I fancy not, ma'am,' and then a matter of fact conversation! 'Miss Beverly is going to be married to Captain Shoulder-knot—My Lord Mortgage has had another tumble at hazard—Sir Harry Wilding has lost his election——They say short aprons are coming into fashion.'

*Love.* Oh! a matter of fact conversation is insupportable.

*Mrs. Bell.* But you meet with nothing else. All in great spirits about nothing, and not an idea among them. Go to Ranelagh, or to what public place you will, it is just the same. A lady comes up to you; 'How charmingly you look!—But, my dear m'em, did you hear what happened to us the other night? We were going home from the opera—you know my aunt Roly-Poly; it was her coach. There was she and Lady Betty Fidget—What a



sweet blonde! How do you do, my dear? [*Curt-sying as to another going by.*] My Lady Betty is quite recovered; we were all frightened about her; but Doctor Snake-root was called in, no, not Doctor Snake-root, Doctor Bolus; and so he altered the course of the medicines, and so my Lady Betty is purely now.—Well, there was she, and my aunt, and Sir George Bragwell—a pretty man Sir George—finest teeth in the world—Your ladyship's most obedient—[*Curt-sying*]. We expected you last night, but you did not come.—He! he! he!—and so there was Sir George and the rest of us; and so, turning the corner of Bond-street, the brute of a coachman—I humbly thank your grace [*Curt-sies.*]—the brute of a coachman overturned us, and so my aunt Roly-Poly was frightened out of her wits; and Lady Betty has had her nerves again. Only think! such accidents!—I am glad to see you look so well; *a l'honneur*; he! he! he!

*Love.* Ho! ho! you paint to the life. I see her moving before me in all her airs.

*Mrs. Bell.* With this conversation their whole stock is exhausted, and away they run to cards. Quadrille has murdered wit!

*Love.* Ay, and beauty too. Cards are the worst enemies to a complexion: the small-pox is not so bad. The passions throw themselves into every feature: I have seen the countenance of an angel changed, in a moment, to absolute deformity: the little loves and graces that sparkled in the eye, bloomed in the cheek, and smiled about the mouth, all wing their flight, and leave the face, which they

before adorned, a prey to grief, to anger, malice, and fury, and the whole train of fretful passions.

*Mrs. Bell.* And the language of the passions is sometimes heard upon these occasions.

*Love.* Very true, ma'am; and if, by chance, they do bridle and hold in a little, the struggle they undergo is the most ridiculous fight in nature. I have seen a huge oath quivering on the pale lip of a reigning toast for half an hour together, and an uplifted eye accusing the gods for the loss of an odd trick. And then, at last, the whole room in a Babel of sounds. 'My lord, you flung away the game.—Sir George, why did not you rough the spade?—Captain Hazard, why did not you lead through the honours?—Ma'am, it was not the play—Pardon me, fir—but ma'am,—but fir—I would not play with you for straws; don't you know what Hoyle says?—If A and B are partners against C and D, and the game nine all, A and B have won three tricks, and C and D four tricks; C leads his suit, D puts up the king, then returns the suit; A passes, C puts up the queen, and B trumps it;' and so A and B, and C and D are bandied about; they attack, they defend, and all is jargon and confusion, wrangling, noise, and nonsense; and high life, and polite conversation.—Ha! ha! ha!

*Mrs. Bell.* Ho! ho! the pencil of Hogarth could not do it better. And yet one is dragged to these places. One must play sometimes. We must let our friends pick our pockets now and then, or they drop our acquaintance. Do you ever play, my lord?

*Love.* Play, ma'am?—[*Aside.*] What does she mean? I must play the hypocrite to the end of

the chapter.—Play?—Now and then, as you say, one must, to oblige, and from necessity; but from taste, or inclination, no; I never touch a card.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh! very true; I forgot. You dedicated your time to the muses; a downright rhyming peer. Do you know, my Lord, that I am charmed with your song?

*Love.* Are you?

*Mrs. Bell.* Absolutely; and I really think you would make an admirable Vauxhall poet.

*Love.* Nay, now you flatter me.

*Mrs. Bell.* No, as I live; it is very pretty. And do you know that I can sing it already? Come, you shall hear how I murder it. I have no voice to-day, but you shall hear me. [*Sings.*

*Attend, all ye fair, and I'll tell you the art,  
To bind ev'ry fancy with ease in your chains;  
To hold in soft fetters the conjugal heart,  
And banish from HYMEN his doubts and his pains.*

*When Juno was deck'd with the Cestus of Love,  
At first she was handsome; she charming became:  
With skill the soft passions it taught her to move,  
To kindle at once, and to keep up the flame.*

*'Tis this gives the eyes all their magic and fire,  
The voice-melting accents; impassions the kiss;  
Confers the sweet smile, that awakens desire,  
And plants round the fair each incentive to bliss.*

*Thence flows the gay chat, more than reason that charms ;  
 The eloquent blush, that can beauty improve ;  
 The fond sigh, the fond vow, the soft touch that alarms ;  
 The tender disdain, the renewal of love.*

*Te fair, take the Cestus, and practise its power :  
 The mind unaccomplish'd, mere features are vain ;  
 With wit, with good humour, enliven each hour,  
 And the loves, and the graces, shall walk in your  
 train.*

*Love.* My poetry is infinitely obliged to you. It grows into sense as you sing it. Your voice, like the Cestus of Venus, bestows a grace upon every thing.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh ! fullsome ; I sing horridly. [*Goes to the glass.*] How do I look ?—Don't tell me, my lord : you are studying a compliment, but I am resolved to mortify you ; I won't hear it.—Well ! have you thought of any thing ? Let it pass ; 'tis too late now. Pray, my lord, how came you to choose so grave a subject as connubial happiness ?

*Love.* Close and particular that question ! [*Aside.*

*Mrs. Bell.* Juno ! Hymen ! doubts and pains ! one would almost swear that you have a wife at home who sat for the picture.

*Love.* Ma'am, the——[*Embarrassed.*] The compliment—you are only laughing at me—the subject, from every day's experience——[*Aside.*] Does she suspect me ?—the subject is common——Bachelors' wives, you know——ha ! ha !—And

when you inspire the thought; when you are the bright original, it is no wonder that the copy——

*Mrs. Bell.* Horrid! going to harp on the old string. Odious solicitations! I hate all proposals. I am not in the humour. You must release me now: your visit is rather long. I have indulged you a great while. And besides, were I to listen to your vows, what would become of poor Sir Brilliant Fashion?

*Love.* Sir Brilliant Fashion?

*Mrs. Bell.* Do you know him?

*Love.* I know whom you mean. I have seen him; but that's all. He lives with a strange set, and does not move in any sphere. If he is a friend of yours, I have no more to say.

*Mrs. Bell.* Is there any thing to say against him?

*Love.* Nay, I have no knowledge of the gentleman. They who know him best, don't rate him high. A sort of current coin that passes in this town. You will do well to beware of counterfeits.

*Mrs. Bell.* But this is very alarming——

*Enter MIGNIONET, in a violent Hurry.*

*Mign.* My dear madam, I am frightened out of my senses. The poor lady——where are the hartshorn drops?

*Love.* The lady! what lady?

*Mign.* Never stand asking what lady. She has fainted away all on a sudden: she is now in strong hysterics; give me the drops.

*Mrs. Bell.* I must run to her assistance. Adieu, my lord. I shall be at home in the evening. Mig-



nionet, step this way. Your lordship will excuse me: I shall expect to see you. Come, Mignionet, make haste; make haste. [*Exit with Mignionet.*]

*Love.* I hope the lady has not overheard me. What a villain am I to carry on this scheme against so much beauty, innocence, and merit! And to wear this badge of honour for the darkest purposes! And then my friend, Sir Brilliant, will it be fair to supplant him?—Pr'ythee, be quiet, my dear conscience! none of your meddling: don't interrupt a gentleman in his pleasures. Don't you know, my good friend, that love has no respect for persons, but soars above all laws of honour and of friendship? No reflection; have her I must, and that quickly too, or she will discover all. Besides, this is my wife's fault: why does not she make home agreeable? I am willing to be happy; I could be constant to her, but she is not formed for happiness. What the devil is Madam Fortune about now?—[*Sir Brilliant sings within.*] Sir Brilliant, by all that's infamous. Confusion! no place to hide me? no escape? The door is locked. Mignionet, Mignionet, open the door.

*Mign.* [*Within.*] You must not come in here.

*Love.* What shall I do? This star, and this ribbon will bring me to disgrace. Away with this tell-tale evidence. [*Takes off the ribbon.*] Go, thou blushing devil, and hide thyself for ever.

[*Puts it in his pocket.*]

*Enter Sir BRILLIANT, singing.*

*Sir Brill.* Mrs. Bellmour, I have such a story for you.—How!—Lovemore?

*Love.* Your slave, Sir Brilliant, your slave.

[*Hiding the star with his hat.*]

*Sir Bril.* I did not think you had been acquainted here.

*Love.* You are right. I came in quest of you. I saw the lady. I was drawn thither by mere curiosity. We have had some conversation; and I made it subservient to your purposes. I have been giving a great character of you.

*Sir Bril.* You are always at the service of your friends. But what's the matter? what are you fumbling about?

[*Pulls the hat.*]

*Love.* 'Sdeath! have a care: don't touch me.

[*Puts his handkerchief to his breast.*]

*Sir Bril.* What the devil is the matter?

*Love.* Oh! keep off—[*Aside.*] Here's a business. —Taken in the old way; let me pass.—I have had a fling at Lord Etheridge: he will be out of favour with the widow: I have done you that good.—Racks and torments, my old complaint!

[*Wanting to pass him.*]

*Sir Bril.* What complaint? You had better sit down.

*Love.* No, no; air, the air. I must have a surgeon. A stroke of a tennis-ball! My Lord Rackett's unlucky left-hand. Let me pass. There is something forming here. [*Passes him.*] To be caught is the devil. [*Aside.*] Don't mention my name. You will counteract all I have said.—Oh! torture, torture!—I will explain to you another time. Sir Brilliant, yours. I have served your interest—Oh! there is certainly something forming.

[*Exit.*]

*Sir Bril.* What does all this mean?—So, so, Mrs. Lovemore's suspicions are well founded.—The widow has her private visits, I see. Yes, yes; there is something forming here.

*Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR.*

So; here she comes. The whole shall be explained. I hope, ma'am, that I don't interrupt you with any piquet-friend.

*Mrs. Bell.* You are always a torment; what brings you hither?

*Sir Bril.* There are times, ma'am, when a visit—

*Mrs. Bell.* Is unseasonable, and yours is so now. How can you tease me?

*Sir Bril.* I thought as much.—There are some things that may require to be discussed between us.

*Mrs. Bell.* Reserve them all for another time. I can't hear you now. You must leave me. There is a lady taken ill in the next room.

*Sir Bril.* And here has been a gentleman taken ill in this room.

*Mrs. Bell.* How troublesome! you must be gone. Do you dispute my will and pleasure?—Fly this moment.

*Sir Bril.* But ma'am—Nay, if you insist upon it— [Goes.]

*Mrs. Bell.* But, sir!—I will be absolute: you must leave me. [Puts him out.] There, and now I'll make sure of the door.

*Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE, leaning on MIGNIONET.*

*Mign.* This way, madam: here is more air in this room.

*Mrs. Bell.* How do you find yourself? Pray sit down.

*Mrs. Love.* My spirits were too weak. I could not support it any longer; such a scene of perfidy!

*Mrs. Bell.* You astonish me: what perfidy?

*Mrs. Love.* Perfidy of the blackest dye; I told you that you were acquainted with my husband?

*Mrs. Bell.* Acquainted with your husband!

[*Angrily.*

*Mrs. Love.* A moment's patience—Yes, madam, you are acquainted with him.—The base man, who went hence but now——

*Mrs. Bell.* Sir Brilliant Fashion?

*Mrs. Love.* No; your Lord Etheridge, as he calls himself——

*Mrs. Bell.* Lord Etheridge? What of him, pray?

*Mrs. Love.* False, dissembling man! he is my husband, ma'am: not Lord Etheridge, but plain Mr. Lovemore; my Mr. Lovemore.

*Mrs. Bell.* And has he been base enough to assume a title to ensnare me to my undoing?

*Mign.* [*Going.*] Well, for certain, I believe the devil's in me: I always thought him a sly one.

[*Exit.*

*Mrs. Love.* To see him carrying on this dark design,—to see the man whom I have ever esteemed and loved,—the man whom I must still love,—esteem him, I fear, I never can,—to see him before my face with that artful treachery! it was too much for sensibility like mine; I felt the shock too severely, and I sunk under it.

*Mrs. Bell.* I am ready to sink this moment with amazement. I saw him, for the first time, at old Mrs. Loveit's. She introduced him to me. The appointment was of her own making.

*Mrs. Love.* You know Mrs. Loveit's character, I suppose.

*Mrs. Bell.* The practised veteran!—Could I suspect that a woman, in her style of life, would lend herself to a vile stratagem against my honour? That she would join in a conspiracy against her own sex?—Mr. Lovemore shall never enter these doors again—I am obliged to you, ma'am, for this visit; to me a providential incident. I am sorry for your share in it. The discovery secures my peace and happiness; to you it is a fatal conviction, a proof unanswerable against the person to whom you are joined for life.

*Mrs. Love.* After this discovery, it cannot be for life. I am resolved not to pass another day under his roof.

*Mrs. Bell.* Hold, hold: no sudden resolutions. Consider a little: passion is a bad adviser. This may take a turn for your advantage.

*Mrs. Love.* That can never be: I am lost beyond redemption.

*Mrs. Bell.* Don't decide too rashly. Come, come, the man who has certain qualities, is worth thinking about, before one throws the hideous thing away for ever. Mr. Lovemore is a traitor; but is not he still amiable? And besides, you have heard his sentiments. That song points at something. Perhaps you are a little to blame. He did not



write upon such a subject, without a cause to suggest it. We will talk over this matter coolly. You have saved me, and I must return the obligation. You shall stay dinner with me.

*Mrs. Love.* Excuse me. Mr. Lovemore may possibly go home. He shall hear of his guilt, while the sense of it pierces here, and wounds me to the quick.

*Mrs. Bell.* Now there you are wrong: take my advice first. I will lay such a plan as may ensure him yours for ever. Come, come, you must not leave me yet. [*Takes her hand.*] Answer me one question: don't you still think he has qualities that do in some sort apologize for his vices?

*Mrs. Love.* I don't know what to think of it: I hope he has.

*Mrs. Bell.* Very well then. I have lost a lover; you may gain one. Your conduct upon this occasion may reform him; and let me tell you that the man, who has it in his power to atone for his faults, should not be entirely despised.——Let the wife exert herself; let her try her powers of pleasing, and take my word for it,

*The wild gallant no more abroad will roam,*

*But find his lov'd variety at home.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in LOVEMORE'S House. Mr. and Mrs. LOVEMORE at Table after Dinner: Servants taking Things out of the Room.*

*Lovemore. [Filling a glass.]*

I WONDER you are not tired of the same eternal topic. *[Sipping his wine.]*

*Mrs. Love.* If I make it an eternal topic, it is for your own good, Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* I know I have your good wishes, and you have mine. All our absent friends, Mrs. Lovemore. *[Drinks.]*

*Mrs. Love.* If you would but wish well to yourself, sir, I should be happy.—But in the way you go on, your health must be ruined; day is night, and night day; your substance squandered; your constitution destroyed; and your family quite neglected.

*Love.* Family neglected! you see I dined at home, and this is my reward for it.

*Mrs. Love.* You dined at home, Sir, because something abroad has disconcerted you. You went, I suppose, after I saw you at Lady Constant's, to your old haunt, your friend, Mrs. Loveit——

*Love.* Mrs. Loveit! ha! ha! I dropt her acquaintance long ago. No, my love, I drove into the city, and spent the rest of the morning upon business. I had long accounts to settle with old Discount, the banker.

*Mrs. Love.* And that to be sure engrossed all your time. Business must be minded. Did you find him at home?

*Love.* It was by his own appointment. I went to his house directly after I parted from you. I have been no where else. Matters of account always fatigue me.

*Mrs. Love.* I would not be too inquisitive, sir.

*Love.* Oh! no; you never are. I staid at the banker's the rest of the time; and I came straight from his house to have the pleasure of dining with you.

[Fills a glass of wine.]

*Mrs. Love.* Were there any sincerity in that declaration, I should be happy. A tavern life has hitherto been your delight. I wonder what delight you can find in such an eternal round of gaming, riot, and dissipation. Will you answer me one question?

*Love.* With great pleasure,—[Aside.]—if it is not inconvenient.

*Mrs. Love.* Lay your hand on your heart, and tell me,—Have I deserved this usage?

*Love.* My humble service to you, my love.

[Drinks.]

*Mrs. Love.* I am sure I have never been deficient in any one point of the duty I owe you. You won my heart, and I gave it freely.

*Love.* [Going to sleep.] It is very true.

*Mrs. Love.* Your interest has been mine. I have known no pleasure unconnected with your happiness. Diversions, show, and pomp, have had no allurements for me.

*Love.* [*Dropping asleep.*] Yes,—you are right—just as you please—

*Mrs. Love.* Had I been inclined to follow the example of other women, your fortune would have felt it before now. You might have been thousands out of pocket; but your interest has been the object of my attention; and your convenience—

*Love.* [*Turns his chair from her.*] You reason very—you reason admir—ably—admir—ably—always—al—always—gay—and—enter—entertaining—

[*Going to sleep.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Marriage is generally considered as an introduction to the great scene of the world. I thought it a retreat to less noisy and serener pleasures. What is called polite company [*He falls fast asleep.*] was not my taste. You was lavish in expence; I was, therefore, an oeconomist. From the moment marriage made me yours, the pleasure arising from your company—There! fast asleep! Agreeable company indeed!—This is ever his way. [*She rises.*] Unfeeling man!—It is too plain that I am grown his aversion. Mr. Love—more! [*Looking at him.*] you little think what a scene this day has brought to light.—And yet he hopes with falsehood to varnish and disguise his treachery. How mean the subterfuge! shall I rouse him now, and tax him with his guilt? My heart is too full: reproach will only tend to exasperate, and perhaps make him irreconcilable. The pride that can stoop to low and wretched artifice, but ill can brook detection. Let him rest for the present. The widow Bellmour's experiment may answer bet-

ter.—I will try it, at least.—Oh! Mr. Lovemore, you will break my heart. [*Looks at him, and exit.*

*Love.* [*Talking in his sleep.*] I do listen—I am not asleep. [*Sleeps and nods.*] You are very right;—always right—I am only thinking a little. No—no—no—[*Mutters indistinctly.*] It was not two o'clock—in bed—in bed by twelve—Sir Bashful is an oaf—The widow Bellmour—[*Sleeps, and his head rolls about.*]—What's the matter? [*Waking.*] I beg your pardon; I was beginning to nod. What did you say, my dear? [*Leans on the table, without looking about.*] One cannot always, you know—[*Turns about.*] 'Sdeath! she is gone! Oh! fast asleep. This is ever the way when one dines at home. Let me shake it off. [*Rises.*] What's o'clock?—No amusement in this house; what shall I do? The widow?—I must not venture in that quarter. My evil genius, Sir Brilliant, will be busy there. Is any body in the way? I must fally out. My dear Venus, favour your votary this afternoon:—

—Your best arms employ,  
All wing'd with pleasure, and all tipt with joy. [*Exit.*]

## SCENE II.

*Changes to Sir BASHFUL's. Enter Lady CONSTANT and FURNISH.*

*Lady Conf.* Who brought this letter?

*Fur.* A servant of Mrs. Lovemore's: he waits an answer.



*Lady Conf.* My compliments to Mrs. Lovemore, and I shall wait upon her.

*Fur.* Yes, ma'am.

[*Going.*]

*Lady Conf.* And hark ye, Furnish;—have the things been carried to Sir Brilliant, as I ordered?

*Fur.* I have obeyed your ladyship's commands. The steward went himself. Mr. Pounce, your ladyship knows, is a trusty body. You may depend upon his care.

*Lady Conf.* Go, and send Mrs. Lovemore her answer. She may depend upon my being with her in time. [*Exit Furnish.*] What can Mrs. Lovemore want? [*Reads.*] '*Ladyship's company to a card-party; but cards are the least part of my object. I have something of higher moment in view, and the presence of my friends is absolutely necessary.*' There is some mystery in all this. What does she mean? I shall go, and then the scene will clear up: those diamond buckles embarrass me more than Mrs. Lovemore's unintelligible letter. Diamond buckles to me! From what quarter? Who could send them? Nobody but Sir Brilliant. I am right in my conclusion: they came from him. Who could take the liberty but a person of his cast? A presuming man! But I have mortified his vanity. Before this time, he has found his diamonds thrown back upon his hands, with the disdain which such confidence deserves.—But if I have made a mistake!—Oh! no; no danger. Has not Sir Brilliant made overtures to me? Has not he declared himself? He sees Sir Bashful's behaviour, and his vanity plumes itself upon that circumstance. To give me my revenge against a

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crazy and insufferable husband, he would fain induce me to ruin myself with a coxcomb. Besides; he heard the whole of Sir Bashful's dispute about diamonds and trinkets: the thing is clear; it was Sir Brilliant sent them; and by that stratagem he hopes to bribe me into compliance.—That bait will never take; though here comes one, who, I am sure, deserves to be treated without a grain of ceremony.

*Enter Sir BASHFUL.*

*Sir Bash.* Here she is. Now let me see whether she will take any notice of the present I sent her. She has reason to be in good humour, I think.—Your servant, madam.

*Lady Conf.* Your address is polite, sir.

*Sir Bash.* [*Aside.*] Still proud and obstinate!—Has any thing happened to disturb the harmony of your temper?

*Lady Conf.* Considering what little discord you make, it is a wonder that my temper is not always in tune.

*Sir Bash.* If you never gave me cause, madam—

*Lady Conf.* Oh! for mercy's sake, truce with altercation. I am tired out with the eternal violence of your temper. Those frequent starts of passion hurry me out of my senses: and those unaccountable whims, that hold such constant possession of you——

*Sir Bash.* Whims, madam?—Not to comply with you in every thing, is a whim, truly. Must I yield to the exorbitant demands of your extra-

gance? When you laid close siege to me for diamond baubles, and I know not what, was that a whim of mine? Did I take that fancy into my head without cause, and without sufficient foundation?

*Lady Conf.* Well, we have exhausted the subject. Have not you told me a thousand times that there is no living with me? I agree to it. And have not I returned the compliment? We have nothing new to say; and now, all that remains, is to let the lawyer reduce to writing our mutual opinions, and so we may part with the pleasure of giving each other a most woful character.

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside.*] The buckles have had no effect. Stubborn! she has received them, and won't own it.

*Lady Conf.* A dash of your pen, sir, at the foot of certain articles now preparing, will make us both easy.

[*Going.*]

*Sir Bask.* If we don't live happily, it is your own fault.

*Lady Conf.* That is very odd.

*Sir Bask.* If you would controul your passion for play——

*Lady Conf.* Quite threadbare!

*Sir Bask.* I have still a regard for you.

*Lady Conf.* Worn-out to frippery!—I can't hear any more. The law will dress it up in new language for us, and that will end our differences.

[*Exit.*]

*Sir Bask.* [*Alone.*] I must unburthen my heart: there is no time to be lost. I love her; I admire

her; she inflames my tenderest passions, and raises such a conflict here in my very heart, I cannot any longer conceal the secret from her. I'll go and tell her all this moment.—But then that meddling fiend, her maid, will be there: po! I can turn her out of the room: but then the jade will suspect something. Her ladyship may be alone: I'll send to know where she is. Who is there? Sideboard—

*Enter* SIDEBOARD.

*Sir Bask.* Go and tell your lady that——[*Pauses.*

*Side.* Did your honour want me?

*Sir Bask.* No matter; it does not signify.—

[*Aside.*] I shall never be able to tell her my mind: a glance of her eye, and my own confusion, will undo all.

*Side.* I thought your honour called.

*Sir Bask.* [*Aside*] A thought comes across me; I'll write her a letter. Yes, yes, a letter will do the business. Sideboard, draw the table this way—Reach me a chair.

*Side.* There, your honour.

*Sir Bask.* Do you stay while I write a letter. You shall carry it for me. [*Sits down to write.*

*Side.* Yes, sir. I hope he has an intrigue upon his hands. A servant thrives under a master that has his private amusements. Love on, say I, if you are so given; it will bring grist to my mill.

*Sir Bask.* [*Writing.*] This will surprise her. Warm, passionate, and tender! and yet it does not come up to what I feel.

*Side.* What is he at?—I may as well read the news-paper. [*Takes it out of his pocket.*] What, in the name of wonder, is all this?—Ha, ha! [*Bursts into a loud laugh.*] I never heard the like of this before. Oh, ho, ho, ho!

*Sir Bafb.* What does the scoundrel mean?

[*Stares at him.*]

*Side.* Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing.

*Sir Bafb.* Does the villain suspect me? [*Rises.*] Hark ye, firrah, if ever I find that you dare listen at any door in my house—

*Side.* Sir!

*Sir Bafb.* Confess the truth: have not you been listening to my conversation with Mr. Lovemore this morning?

*Side.* Who, I, fir? I would not be guilty of such a thing: I never did the like in all my days.

*Sir Bafb.* What was you laughing at?

*Side.* A foolish thing in the news-paper, Sir, that's all. I'll read it to your honour. [*Reads.*] We hear that a new comedy is now in rehearsal, and will speedily be performed, intitled, *The Amorous Husband*; or, *The Man in Love with his own Wife*.

*Sir Bafb.* And what do you see to laugh at?

*Side.* See fir? I have lived in a great many families, and never heard of the like before.

*Sir Bafb.* [*Aside.*] There, there, there!—I shall be the butt of my own servants.—Sirrah, leave the room. And let me never hear that you have the trick of listening in my house.



*Side.* No, fir—The Man in Love with his own Wife! [Exit laughing.]

*Sir Bafb.* What does the varlet mean?—No matter—I have finished my letter, and it fhall be fent this moment.—But then, if I fhould get into a comedy? Po! no more fcruples. I'll feal it directly—Sideboard—

*Enter SIDEBOARD.*

*Sir Bafb.* [Sealing the letter.] I have opened my heart to her. What do you bring your hat and ftick for?

*Side.* To go out with your honour's letter.

*Sir Bafb.* You have not far to go. Take this, and let nobody fee you.

*Side.* I warrant me, your honour. [Exit.]

*Sir Bafb.* I feel much lighter now. A load is taken off my heart.

*Enter SIDEBOARD.*

*Sir Bafb.* What do you come back for?

*Side.* A word or two, by way of direction, if you please, fir.

*Sir Bafb.* Blockhead! give it to me—[Aside.] If I direct it, he finds me out.—Go about your bufinefs: I have no occafion for you: leave the room.

*Side.* Very well, fir.—Does he think to manage his own intrigues? If he takes my commiffion out of my hands, I fhall give him warning. The vices of our mafters are all the vails a poor fervant has left. [Exit.]

*Sir Bask.* What must be done?—Mr. Lovemore could conduct this business for me. He is a man of address, and knows all the approaches to a woman's heart. That fellow Sideboard coming again?—No, no; this is lucky. Mr. Lovemore, I am glad to see you.

*Enter LOVEMORE.*

*Love.* A second visit, you see, in one day; entirely on the score of friendship.

*Sir Bask.* And I thank you for it; heartily thank you.

*Love.* I broke away from the company at the St. Alban's on purpose to attend you. Well, I have made your lady easier in her mind, have not I?

*Sir Bask.* We don't hit it at all, Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* No!

*Sir Bask.* I think she has been rather worse since you spoke to her.

*Love.* A good symptom that. [*Aside.*

*Sir Bask.* She has received the diamond buckles. They were delivered to her maid sealed up, and the man never staid to be asked a question. I saw them in her own hand; but not a syllable escaped her. She was not in the least softened, obstinate as a mule!

*Love.* The manner of conveying your presents was not well judged. Why did you not make me the bearer?

*Sir Bash.* I wish I had. She talks of parting; and so, to avoid coming to extremities, I have even thought of telling her the whole truth at once.

*Love.* How? acquaint her with your passion?

*Sir Bash.* Ay, and trust to her honour. I could not venture to speak; I should blush, and falter, and look silly; and so I have writ a letter to her. Here it is, signed and sealed, but not directed. I got into a puzzle about that. Servants, you know, are always putting their own construction upon things.

*Love.* No doubt: and then your secret flies all over the town.

*Sir Bash.* That's what alarmed me. You shall write the superscription and send it to her.

*Love.* No, that won't do. Give her a letter under your hand? I'll speak to her for you: let me try how her pulse beats.

*Sir Bash.* But a letter may draw an answer from her, and then you know [*Smiling at him.*] I shall have it under her hand.

*Love.* I don't like this hurry: we had better take time to consider of it.

*Sir Bash.* No, I can't defer the business of my heart a single moment. It burns like a fever here. Sit down, and write the direction; I'll step and send the servant. He shall carry it, as if it were a letter from yourself.

*Enter* **SIDEBEARD.**

*Side.* Sir Brilliant Fashion is below, sir.

*Love.* What brings him? He will only interrupt us. Go and talk to him, Sir Bashful; hear what

he has to say; amuse him; any thing, rather than let him come up.

*Sir Bash.* I am gone: he shan't molest you.

[*Exit with Sideboard.*]

*Love.* Fly, make haste; and don't let him know that I am here.—A lucky accident this; I have gained time by it. All matters were in a right train, and he himself levelling the road for me, and now this letter blows me up into the air at once. Some unlucky planet rules to-day. First the Widow Bellmour; a hair-breadth 'scape I had of it, and now almost ruined here! What in the name of wonder has he writ to her?—Friendship and wafer, by your leave.—But will that be delicate?—Po! honour has always a great deal to preach upon these occasions; but then the business of my love!—Very true; the passions need but say a word, and their business is done. [*Opens the letter and reads.*] This must never reach her. I'll write a letter from myself. [*Sits down, writes, and starts up.*] I hear him coming: no; all safe. [*Writes.*] This will do:—vastly well. Her husband's inhumanity! Ay, mention that.—The diamonds may be a present from me: yes, I'll venture it—There, there; that will do—Long adored—Ay—sweetest revenge.—Ay—Eternal admirer—Love—more.—Now, now let me see it.—Admirable! this will do the business. [*Seals the letter.*]

*Enter Sir BASHFUL.*

*Sir Bash.* Well, have you sent it?

*Love.* Not yet: I am writing the direction.

*Sir Bash.* And where is that blockhead?—  
Sideboard!

*Enter* SIDEBOARD.

*Sir Bash.* Numskull, why don't you wait?—Mr. Lovemore wants you.

*Love.* Step and deliver this to your lady, and, if she pleases, I will wait upon her.

*Sir Bash.* Charming!—Take it up stairs directly.

*Side.* Up stairs, sir? My lady is in the next room.

*Sir Bash.* Take it to her; make haste; begone.  
[*Exit* Sideboard.] I hope this will succeed: I shall be for ever obliged to you, and so will her ladyship.

*Love.* I hope she will, and I shall be proud to serve her.

*Sir Bash.* You are very good. She won't prove ungrateful, I dare answer for her.—I should like to see how she receives the letter.—The door is conveniently open.—I will have a peep. Ay, there; there she sits.

*Love.* Where, Sir Bashful?

*Sir Bash.* Hush, no noise.—There, do you see her? She has the letter in her hand—This is a critical moment: I am all over in a tremble.

*Love.* Silence; not a word. She opens it.—  
[*Aside.*] Now, my dear Cupid, befriend me now, and your altar shall smoke with incense.

*Sir Bash.* She colours.

*Love.* I like that rising blush: a soft and tender token.



*Sir Bask.* She turns pale.

*Love.* The natural working of the passions.

*Sir Bask.* And now she reddens again.—What is she at now?—There, she has torn the letter in two:—I am a lost, an undone man. [*Walks away.*]

*Love.* She has flung it away with indignation: I am undone too.

[*Aside, and walks away from the door.*]

*Sir Bask.* Mr. Lovemore, you see what it is all come to.

*Love.* I am sorry to see so haughty a spirit.

*Sir Bask.* An arrogant, ungrateful woman! to make such a return to so kind a letter!

*Love.* Ay, so kind a letter!

*Sir Bask.* Did you ever see such an insolent scorn?

*Love.* I never was so disappointed in all my life.

*Sir Bask.* A letter full of the tenderest protestations!

*Love.* Yes; an unreserved declaration of love!

*Sir Bask.* Made with the greatest frankness; throwing myself at her very feet.

*Love.* Did she once smile? was there the faintest gleam of approbation in her countenance?

*Sir Bask.* She repaid it all with scorn, with pride, contempt, and insolence. I cannot bear this; despised, spurned, and treated like a puppy.

*Love.* There it stings—like a puppy, indeed!

*Sir Bask.* Is there a thing in nature so mortifying to the pride of man, as to find oneself rejected and despised by a fine woman, who is conscious of her power, and triumphs in her cruelty?

*Love.* It is the most damnable circumstance!—

*Sir Bask.* My dear Mr. Lovemore, I am obliged to you for taking this matter so much to heart.

*Love.* I take it more to heart than you are aware of.

*Sir Bask.* This is mortifying; enough to make one ashamed all the rest of one's life.

*Love.* I did not expect this fullen ill-humour.

*Sir Bask.* Did you ever know so obstinate, so uncomplying a temper?

*Enter Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Sir Brill.* Sir Baskful, I forgot to tell you—

*Love.* He again! he hunts me up and down, as the vice did the devil, with a dagger of lath, in the old comedy. [*Aside.*

*Sir Brill.* Hey!—what's the matter?—You seem both out of humour: what does this mean? Have you quarrelled?

*Sir Bask.* No, sir, no quarrel:—Why would my booby servant let him in again? [*Aside.*

*Sir Brill.* Strike me stupid, but you look very queer upon it.—Lovemore is borrowing money, I suppose: Sir Baskful is driving a hard bargain, and you can't agree about the premium. Sir Baskful, let my friend Lovemore have the money.

*Sir Bask.* Money!—what does he mean?

*Sir Brill.* Both out of humour, I see: well, as you will. You have no reason to be in harmony with yourselves; my stars shine with a kinder aspect. Here, here, behold a treasury of love. I came back on purpose to shew it to you. [*Takes a*

*baggreen case out of his pocket.*] See what a present I have received; a magnificent pair of diamond buckles, by all that's amiable.

*Love.* How?

*Sir Bash.* [*Walking up to him.*] A pair of diamond buckles!

*Sir Bril.* How such a present should be sent to me is more than I can explain at present. Perhaps my friend, Lovemore, gained some intelligence in the quarter where I surpris'd him to-day, on a visit which I little suspected.

*Love.* That was to serve you: I know nothing of this business.

*Sir Bril.* The pain in your side, I hope, is better.

*Love.* Po! this is only to distract your attention, Sir Bashful.

*Sir Bash.* So I suppose. And was this a present to you?

*Sir Bril.* A present, sir. The consequence of having some tolerable phrase, a person, and a due degree of attention to the service of the ladies.—Don't you envy me, Sir Bashful?

*Sir Bash.* I can't but say I do.—[*Turns to Lovemore.*] My buckles, by all that's false in woman!

*Love.* Take no notice.—[*Walks aside.*] Has he supplanted me here too, as well as with the widow?

*Sir Bril.* What's the matter with you both?—Burning with envy!

*Sir Bash.* And I suppose an elegant epistle, or a well-penned billet-doux, accompanied this token of the lady's affection.

*Sir Bril.* That would have been an agreeable addition, but it is still to come. Too many favours at once might overwhelm a body. A country-looking fellow, as my people tell me, left this, curiously sealed up, at my house: he would not say from whence he came: I should know that in time, was all they could get from him, and I am now panting to learn from whence this mighty success has attended me. *Sir Bashful*, I came, saw, and conquered. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

*Sir Bash.* But may not this be from some lady, who imagines that you sent it, and therefore chooseth to reject your present?

*Sir Bril.* Oh, no; that cannot be the case. A little knowledge of the world would soon convince you that ladies do not usually reject presents from the man who has the good fortune to please by his manner, his taste for dress, and a certain *je ne sçai quoi* in his person and conversation.

*Sir Bash.* So I believe.—[*Walks aside.*] What say you to this, Mr. Lovemore?

*Love.* She would not have torn a letter from him.

*Sir Bril.* No, *Sir Bashful*; a present from me would not have been returned back upon my hands.

*Sir Bash.* I dare say not.—[*To Lovemore.*] I suppose she will give him my three hundred pounds into the bargain.

*Love.* After this, I shall wonder at nothing.

*Sir Bril.* What mortified countenances they both put on!

[*Looks at them and laughs.*]

*Sir Bash.* [*Walking up to Sir Brilliant.*] And I suppose you expect to have this lady?

*Sir Bril.* No doubt of it. This is the forerunner, I think. Hey, Lovemore?—*Sir Bashful*, this it is to be in luck. Ha! ha! [*Laughs at them both.*]

*Love. and Sir Bash.* [*Both forcing a laugh.*] Ha! ha!

*Sir Bril.* You both seem strangely picqued.—Lovemore, what makes you so uneasy?

*Love.* You flatter yourself, and you wrong me—I—I— [*Walks away.*]

*Sir Bash.* He is a true friend: he is uneasy on my account. [*Aside, and looking at Lovemore.*]

*Sir Bril.* And, *Sir Bashful*, something has dashed your spirits. Do you repine at my success?

*Sir Bash.* I can't but say I do, sir.

*Sir Bril.* Oh! very well; you are not disposed to be good company. *A l'honneur*, gentlemen: finish your money matters. Lovemore, where do you spend the evening?

*Love.* A good evening to you, *Sir Brilliant*: I am engaged. Business with *Sir Bashful*, you see—

*Sir Bril.* Well, don't let me be of inconvenience to you. Fare ye well, gentlemen. Thou dear pledge of love [*Looking at the buckles*], thus let me clasp thee to my heart.—*Sir Bashful*, your servant. [*Exit.*]

*Sir Bash.* What think you now, Mr. Lovemore?

*Love.* All unaccountable, sir.

*Sir Bash.* By all that's false, I am gulled, cheated, and imposed upon. I am deceived, and dubbed a rank cuckold. It is too clear: she has given him the buckles, and I suppose my bank-notes have ta-



ken the same course.—Diamond buckles, and three hundred pounds, for Sir Brilliant! A reward for his merit!

*Love.* He is the favourite, and I have been working for him all this time.

*Sir Bash.* I now see through all her artifices. My resolution is fixed. If I can but get ocular demonstration of her guilt; if I can but get the means of proving to the whole world that she is vile enough to cuckold me, I shall then be happy.

*Love.* Why that will be some consolation!

*Sir Bash.* So it will: kind Heaven grant me that at least; make it plain that she dishonours me, and I am amply revenged.—Hark! I hear her coming. She shall know all I think, and all I feel. I have done with her for ever.

*Love.* [*Aside.*] Let me fly the impending storm. If I stay, detection and disgrace pursue me.—Sir Bashful, I am sorry to see matters take this turn. I have done all in my power, and since there is no room to hope for success, I take my leave, and wish you a good night.

*Sir Bash.* No, no; you shall not leave me in this distress. You shall hear me tell her her own, and be a witness of our separation. [*Holding him.*]

*Love.* Excuse me: after what has passed, I shall never be able to endure the sight of her. Fare you well; I must be gone; good night, Sir Bashful.

[*Struggling to go.*]

*Sir Bash.* You are my best friend: I cannot part with you. [*Stands between him and the door.*] Stay and

hear what she has to say for herself; you will see what a turn she will give to the business.

*Love.* [*Aside.*] What turn shall I give it?—  
Confusion! here she comes: I must weather the storm.

*Enter Lady CONSTANT.*

*Lady Conf.* After this behaviour, Mr. Lovemore, I am surpris'd, Sir, that you can think of staying a moment longer in this house.

*Love.* Madam, I——'fideath! I have no invention to assist me at a pinch. [*Aside.*

*Sir Bash.* Mr. Lovemore is my friend, madam, and I desire he will stay in my house as long as he pleases.—Hey, Lovemore! [*Looks at him, and smiles.*

*Love.* [*Aside.*] All must out, I fear.

*Lady Conf.* Your friend, Sir Bashful!—And do you authorise him to take this unbecoming liberty? Have you given him permission to send me a letter, so extravagant in the very terms of it?

*Love.* [*Aside.*] Ay, now 'tis coming, and impudence itself has not a word to say.

*Sir Bash.* I desired him to send that letter, madam.

*Love.* Sir Bashful desired me, ma'am.

[*Bowing respectfully.*

*Sir Bash.* I desired him.

*Love.* All at his request, ma'am.

*Lady Conf.* And am I to be made your sport?—I wonder, Mr. Lovemore, that you would condescend to make yourself a party in so poor a plot. Do you presume upon a trifling mark of civility, which you persuaded me to accept of this morning?

Do you come disguised under a mask of friendship to help this gentleman in his design against my honour, and my happiness?

*Love.* [*Aside.*] Fairly caught, and nothing can bring me off—

*Sir Bash.* A mask of friendship!—He is a true friend, madam; he sees how ill I am treated, and let me tell you, there is not a word of truth in that letter.

*Love.* Not a syllable of truth, ma'am—[*Aside.*] This will do: his own nonsense will save me.

*Sir Bash.* It was all done to try you, madam.

*Love.* Nothing more, ma'am: merely to try you.

*Sir Bash.* By way of experiment only: just to see how you would behave upon it.

*Love.* Nothing else was intended; all to try you, ma'am.

*Lady Conf.* You have been both notably employed. The exploit is worthy of you. Your snare is spread for a woman, and if you had succeeded, the fame of so bright an action would add mightily to two such illustrious characters.

*Sir Bash.* A snare spread for her! Mark that, Mr. Lovemore: she calls it ensnaring.

*Love.* Ensnared to her own good. [*To Sir Bashful.*]—He has pleaded admirably for me. [*Aside.*

*Lady Conf.* As to you, Sir Bashful, I have long ago ceased to wonder at your conduct: you have lost the power of surprising me; but when Mr. Lovemore becomes an accomplice in so mean a plot—

*Sir Bash.* I am in no plot, madam, and no body wants to ensnare you; do we, Lovemore?

*Love.* Sir Bashful knows that no harm was intended.

*Sir Bash.* Yes, I am in the secret, and my friend Lovemore meant no harm.

*Love.* If the letter had succeeded, Sir Bashful knows there would have been no ill consequence.

*Sir Bash.* No harm in nature; but I now see how things are; and since your ladyship will listen to nothing for your own good, it is too plain, from all that has passed between us, that our tempers are by no means fitted for each other, and I am ready to part whenever you please: nay, I will part.

*Lady Conf.* And that is the only point in which we can agree, sir.

*Sir Bash.* Had the letter been sent from another quarter, it would have met with a better reception: we know where your smiles are bestowed.

*Lady Conf.* Deal in calumny, sir; give free scope to malice; I disdain your insinuations.

*Sir Bash.* The fact is too clear, and reproaches are now too late. This is the last of our conversing together; and you may take this by the way, you are not to believe one syllable of that letter.

*Love.* There is not a syllable of it deserves the least credit, ma'am.

*Sir Bash.* It was all a mere joke, madam: was not it, Lovemore?—And as to your being a fine woman, and as to any passion that any body has conceived for you, there was no such thing; you can witness for me, Lovemore: can't you?

*Lady Conf.* Oh! you are witnesses for one another.

*Love.* Sir Bashful knows the fairness of my intentions, and I know his.—[*Aside.*] He has acquitted me better than I expected, thanks to his absurdity.

*Lady Conf.* Go on, and aggravate your ill usage, gentlemen.

*Sir Bash.* It was all a bam, madam, a scene we thought proper to act. Let us laugh at her.

[*Goes up to Lovemore.*]

*Love.* With all my heart—[*Aside.*] A silly block-head! I can't help laughing at him.

[*Laughing heartily.*]

*Sir Bash.* [*Laughing with him.*] Ha! ha! ha!—all a bam; nothing else; a contrivance to make sport for ourselves—hey, Lovemore?

*Lady Conf.* This usage is insupportable. I shall not stay for an explanation. Two such worthy confederates!—Is my chair ready there? You may depend, sir, that this is the last time you will see me in this house. [*Exit.*]

*Sir Bash.* Agreed; a bargain; with all my heart. Lovemore, I have managed this well.

*Love.* Charmingly managed! I did not think you had so much spirit.

*Sir Bash.* I have found her out. The intrigue is too plain. She and Sir Brilliant are both detected.

*Love.* I never suspected that Sir Brilliant was the happy man. I wish I had succeeded, had it been only to mortify his vanity.

*Sir Bash.* And so do I: I wish it too: but never own the letter: deny it to the last.



*Love.* You may depend upon my secrecy.

*Sir Bash.* I am for ever obliged to you. A foolish woman! how she stands in her own light!

*Love.* Truly I think she does. But since I have no interest with her ladyship, I shall now sound a retreat, and leave matters to your own discretion. Success attend you. [Going.]

*Sir Bash.* You must not forsake me in this distress.

*Love.* Had your lady proved tractable, I should not have cared how long I had staid. But since things are come to this pass, I shall now go and see what kind of reception I am to meet with from Mrs. Lovemore.

*Sir Bash.* Don't let her know that you have a regard for her.

*Love.* Oh! no; I see the consequence.—[*Aside.*] Well off this time; and, Madam Fortune, if I trust you again, you shall play me what prank you please. Sir Bashful, yours. [Going.]

*Sir Bash.* A thousand thanks to you. And, hark ye, if I can serve you with your lady——

*Love.* I am much obliged to you: but I shall endeavour to go on, without giving you the trouble of assisting me. And, do you hear? assure my Lady Constant, that I meant nothing but to serve your interest. [Exit.]

*Sir Bash.* Rely upon my management. I can acquit you.—My Lady Constant! Lady Constant!—Let me chase her from my thoughts: can I do it? Rage, fury, love—no more of love! I am glad she tore the letter. Odso! yonder it lies. It is

only torn in two, and she may still piece the fragments together. I'll pick up the letter this moment: it shall never appear in evidence against me. As to Sir Brilliant, his motions shall be watched; I know how to proceed with madam, and if I can but prove the fact, every body will say that I am ill used by her. [Exit.

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ACT V. SCENE I.

*An Apartment at Mr. Lovemore's. Enter Mrs. Lovemore, elegantly dressed; Muslin following her.*

*Muslin.*

WHY, to be sure, ma'am, it is so for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

*Mrs. Love.* I fancy I am: I see the folly of my former conduct. I am determined never to let my spirits sink into a melancholy state again.

*Mus.* Why, that's the very thing, ma'am; the very thing I have always been preaching up to you. Did not I always say, see company, ma'am, take your pleasure, and never break your heart for any man? This is what I always said.

*Mrs. Love.* And you have said enough: spare yourself the trouble now.

*Mus.* I always said so. And what did the world say? Heavens bless her for a sweet woman! and a plague go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, bloody—murdering brute.

*Mrs. Love.* Well, truce with your impertinence; your tongue runs on at such a rate.

*Mus.* Nay, don't be angry: they did say so indeed. But, dear heart, how every body will be overjoy'd when they find you have pluck'd up a little! As for me, it gives me new life, to have so much company in the house, and such a racketing at the door with coaches and chairs, enough to hurry a body out of one's wits. Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, ma'am, and that dress quite becomes you. I suppose, ma'am, you will never wear your negligee again. It is not fit for you indeed, ma'am. It might pass very well with some folks, ma'am, but the like of you——

*Mrs. Love.* Will you never have done? Go and see who is coming up stairs.

*Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR.*

*Mrs. Love.* Mrs. Bellmour, I revive at the sight of you. Muslin, do you step, and do as I ordered you.

*Mus.* What the deuce can she be at now? [*Exit.*]

*Mrs. Bell.* You see I am punctual to my time.— Well, I admire your dress of all things. It's mighty pretty.

*Mrs. Love.* I am glad you like it. But, under all this appearance of gaiety, I have at the bottom but an aching heart.

*Mrs. Bell.* Be ruled by me, and I'll answer for the event. Why really, now you look just as you should do.—Why neglect so fine a figure?

*Mrs. Love.* You are so obliging!

*Mrs. Bell.* And so true.—What was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional ornaments of dress; and if you will but animate and inspire the whole with those graces of the mind which I am sure you possess, the impression cannot fail of being effectual upon all beholders; even upon the depraved mind of Mr. Lovemore.—You have not seen him since, have you?

*Mrs. Love.* He dined at home, but was soon upon the wing to his usual haunts.

*Mrs. Bell.* If he does but come home time enough, depend upon it my plot will take. And have you got together a good deal of company?

*Mrs. Love.* Yes, a tolerable party.

*Mrs. Bell.* That's right: shew him that you will consult your own pleasure.

*Mrs. Love.* Apropos, as soon as I came home I received a letter from Sir Brilliant, in a style of warmth and tenderness that would astonish you. He begs to see me again, and has something particular to communicate. I left it in my dressing-room; you shall see it by-and-by: I took your advice, and sent him word he might come. The lure brought him hither immediately: he makes no doubt of his success with me.

*Mrs. Bell.* Well! two such friends as Sir Brilliant and Mr. Lovemore, I believe never existed!

*Mrs. Love.* Their falsehood to each other is unparalleled. I left Sir Brilliant at the card-table: as soon as he can disengage himself, he will quit

his company in pursuit of me. I forgot to tell you, my Lady Constant is here.

*Mrs. Bell.* Is she?

*Mrs. Love.* She is, and has been making the strangest discovery: Mr. Lovemore has had a design there too!

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh! I don't doubt him: but the more proof we have the better.

*Mrs. Love.* There is sufficient proof: you must know, ma'am—[*A rap at the door.*] As I live and breathe, I believe this is Mr. Lovemore.

*Mrs. Bell.* If it is, every thing goes on as I could wish.

*Mrs. Love.* I hear his voice, it is he. How my heart beats!

*Mrs. Bell.* Courage, and the day's our own. He must not see me yet: where shall I run?

*Mrs. Love.* In there, ma'am. Make haste; I hear his step on the stairs.

*Mrs. Bell.* Success attend you. I am gone.

[*Exit.*]

*Mrs. Love.* I am frightened out of my senses. What the event may be I fear to think; but I must go through with it.

*Enter LOVEMORE.*

*Mrs. Love.* You are welcome home, sir.

*Love.* Mrs. Lovemore, your servant. [*Without looking at her.*]

*Mrs. Love.* It is somewhat rare to see you at home so early.

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*Love.* I said I should come home, did not I? I always like to be as good as my word.—What could the widow mean by this usage? to make an appointment, and break it thus abruptly!

[*Aside.*

*Mrs. Love.* He seems to muse upon it. [*Aside.*

*Love.* [*Aside.*] She does not mean to do so treacherous a thing as to jilt me? Oh, Lord! I am wonderfully tired.

[*Yawns, and sinks into an armed chair.*

*Mrs. Love.* Are you indisposed, my dear?

*Love.* No, my love; I thank you, I am very well;—a little fatigued only, with jolting over the stones all the way into the city this morning. I have paid a few visits this afternoon.—Confoundedly tired.—Where's William?

*Mrs. Love.* Do you want any thing?

*Love.* Only my cap and slippers. I am not in spirits, I think.

[*Yawns.*

*Mrs. Love.* You are never in spirits at home, Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* I beg your pardon: I never am any where more cheerful. [*Stretching his arms.*] I wish I may die if I an't very happy at home,——very [*Yawns.*] very happy!

*Mrs. Love.* I can hear otherwise. I am informed that Mr. Lovemore is the promoter of mirth and good humour wherever he goes.

*Love.* Oh! no, you over-rate me; upon my soul you do.

*Mrs. Love.* I can hear, sir, that no person's company is so acceptable to the ladies; that your

wit inspires every thing: you have your compliment for one, your smile for another, a whisper for a third, and so on, sir: you divide your favours, and are every where, but at home, all whim, vivacity, and spirit.

*Love.* Ho! ho! [*Laughing.*] how can you talk so? I swear I can't help laughing at the fancy. All whim, vivacity, and spirit! I shall burst my sides. How can you banter one so?—I divide my favours too!—Oh, heavens! I can't stand this raillery: such a description of me!—I that am rather saturnine, of a serious cast, and inclined to be pensive! I can't help laughing at the oddity of the conceit.—Oh Lord! Oh Lord! [*Laughs.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Just as you please, sir. I see that I am ever to be treated with indifference. [*Walks across the stage.*]

*Love.* [*Rises, and walks a contrary way.*] I can't put this widow Bellmour out of my head. [*Aside.*]

*Mrs. Love.* If I had done any thing to provoke this usage, this cold, determined contempt—

[*Walking.*]

*Love.* I wish I had done with that business entirely; but my desires are kindled, and must be satisfied. [*Aside.*]

[*They walk for some time silently by each other.*]

*Mrs. Love.* What part of my conduct gives you offence, Mr. Lovemore?

*Love.* Still harping upon that ungrateful string!—but pr'ythee don't set me a laughing again.—Offence! nothing gives me offence, child!—you know I am very fond—[*TURNS and walks.*]—I like

you of all things, and think you a most admirable wife;—prudent, managing,—careless of your own person, and very attentive to mine;—not much addicted to pleasure,—grave, retired, and domestic; you govern your house, pay the tradesmen's bills, [*Tawns.*] scold the servants, and love your husband:—upon my soul, a very good wife!—as good a sort of a wife [*Tawns.*] as a body might wish to have.—Where's William? I must go to bed.

*Mrs. Love.* To bed so early! Had not you better join the company?

*Love.* I shan't go out to-night.

*Mrs. Love.* But I mean the company in the dining-room.

*Love.* Company in the dining-room!

[*Stares at her.*]

*Mrs. Love.* Yes: I invited them to a rout.

*Love.* A rout in my house!—and you dressed out too!—What is all this?

*Mrs. Love.* You have no objection, I hope.

*Love.* Objection!—No, I like company, you know, of all things; I'll go and join them: who are they all?

*Mrs. Love.* You know 'em all; and there's your friend, Sir Brilliant.

*Love.* Is he there? I shall be glad to see him. But, pray, how comes all this about?

*Mrs. Love.* I intend to see company often.

*Love.* Do you?

*Mrs. Love.* Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel luxuriously in a course of pleasure. I shall pursue my own plan of diversion.

*Love.* Do so ma'am: the change in your temper will not be disagreeable.

*Mrs. Love.* And so I shall, sir, I assure you. Adieu to melancholy, and welcome pleasure, wit, and gaiety. *[She walks about and sings.]*

*Love.* What the devil has come over her? And what in the name of wonder does all this mean?

*Mrs. Love.* Mean, sir!—It means, it means—how can you ask me what it means?—Well, to be sure, the sobriety of that question!—Do you think a woman of spirit can have leisure to tell her meaning, when she is all air, alertness, rapture, and enjoyment.

*Love.* She is mad!—Stark mad!

*Mrs. Love.* You're mistaken, sir,—not mad, but in spirits, that's all. Am I too flighty for you?—Perhaps I am: you are of a saturnine disposition, inclined to think a little or so. Well, don't let me interrupt you; don't let me be of any inconvenience. That would be the unpolitest thing; a married couple to be interfering and encroaching on each other's pleasures! Oh, hideous! it would be Gothic to the last degree. Ha, ha, ha!

*Love.* *[Forcing a laugh.]* Ha, ha!—Ma'am, you—ha, ha! you are perfectly right.

*Mrs. Love.* Nay, but I don't like that laugh now: I positively don't like it. Can't you laugh out as you were used to do? For my part, I'm determined to do nothing else all the rest of my life.

*Love.* This is the most astonishing thing! Ma'am, I don't rightly comprehend—

*Mrs. Love.* Oh Lud! oh Lud!—with that important face! Well, but come! what don't you comprehend?

*Love.* There is something in this treatment that I don't so well—

*Mrs. Love.* Oh! are you there, fir! How quickly they, who have no sensibility for the peace and happiness of others, can feel for themselves, Mr. Lovemore!—But that's a grave reflection, and I hate reflection.

*Love.* What has she got into her head? This sudden change, Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you—

*Mrs. Love.* Nay, don't be frightened: there is no harm in innocent mirth, I hope: never look so grave upon it. I assure you, fir, that though, on your part, you seem determined to offer constant indignities to your wife, and though the laws of retaliation would in some sort exculpate her, if, when provoked to the utmost, exasperated beyond all enduring, she should, in her turn, make him know what it is to receive an injury in the tenderest point—

*Love.* Madam! *[Angrily.]*

*Mrs. Love.* Well, well, don't be alarmed. I shan't retaliate: my own honour will secure you there; you may depend upon it.—Will you come and play a game at cards? Well, do as you like; you won't come? No, no, I see you won't—What say you to a bit of supper with us?—Not that neither?—Follow your inclinations: it is not material what a body eats, you know; the company expects me; adieu, Mr. Lovemore, yours, yours.

*[Exit singing.]*



*Love.* This is a frolic I never saw her in before!—Laugh all the rest of my life!—laws of retaliation!—an injury in the tenderest point!—the company expects me,—adieu! yours, yours!—[*Mimicking her.*] What the devil is all this? Some of her female friends have been tampering with her. So, so: I must begin to look a little sharp after madam. I'll go this moment into the card-room, and watch whom she whispers with, whom she ogles with, and every circumstance that can lead to— [Going.]

*Enter MUSLIN in a hurry.*

*Mus.* Madam, madam,—here's your letter; I would not for all the world that my master—

*Love.* What, is she mad too? What's the matter, woman?

*Mus.* Nothing, sir,—nothing: I wanted a word with my lady, that's all, sir.

*Love.* You would not for the world that your master—What was you going to say?—what paper's that?

*Mus.* Paper, sir!

*Love.* Paper, sir! Let me see it.

*Mus.* Lord, sir! how can you ask a body for such a thing? It's a letter to me, sir, a letter from the country; a letter from my sister, sir. She bids me to buy her a *sbiver de frize* cap, and a sixteenth in the lottery; and tells me of a number she dreamt of, that's all, sir: I'll put it up.

*Love.* Let me look at it. Give it me this moment. [*Reads.*] To Mrs. Lovemore!—Brilliant

*Fashion.* This is a letter from the country, is it?

*Mus.* That, fir—that is—no, fir,—no;—that's not sister's letter.—If you will give me that back, fir, I'll shew you the right one.

*Love.* Where did you get this?

*Mus.* Sir!

*Love.* Where did you get it?—Tell me truth.

*Mus.* Dear heart, you fright a body so—in the parlour, fir—I found it there.

*Love.* Very well!—leave the room.

*Mus.* The devil fetch it, I was never so out in my politics in all my days. [Exit.]

*Love.* A pretty epistle truly! [Reads.] 'When you command me, my dearest Mrs. Lovemore, never to touch again upon the subject of love, you command an impossibility. You excite the flame, and forbid it to burn. Permit me once more to throw myself on my knees, and implore your compassion.'—Compassion, with a vengeance on him!—'Think you see me now with tender, melting, supplicating eyes, languishing at your feet.'—Very well, fir—'Can you find it in your heart to persist in cruelty?—Grant me but access to you once more, and, in addition to what I already said this morning, I will urge such motives.'—Urge motives, will ye?—'as will convince you, that you should no longer hesitate in gratitude, to reward him, who here makes a vow of eternal constancy and love.' BRILLIANT FASHION.'

So! so! so! your very humble servant, Sir Brilliant Fashion!—This is your friendship for me, is it?—You are mighty kind indeed, fir,—but I

thank you as much as if you had really done me the favour: and, Mrs. Lovemore, I'm your humble servant too. She intends to laugh all the rest of her life! This letter will change her note. Yonder she comes along the gallery, and Sir Brilliant in full chase of her. They come this way. Could I but detect them both now! I'll step aside, and who knows but the devil may tempt them to their undoing. A polite husband I am: there's the coast clear for you, madam. *[Exit.]*

*Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE and Sir BRILLIANT.*

*Mrs. Love.* I have already told you my mind, Sir Brilliant. Your civility is odious; your compliments fulsome; and your solicitations insulting. — I must make use of harsh language, sir: you provoke it.

*Sir Bril.* Not retiring to solitude and discontent again, I hope, madam! Have a care, my dear Mrs. Lovemore, of a relapse.

*Mrs. Love.* No danger, sir: don't be too solicitous about me. Why leave the company! Let me entreat you to return, sir.

*Sir Bril.* By Heaven, there is more rapture in being one moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the company of a whole drawing-room of beauties. Round you are melting pleasures, tender transports, youthful loves, and blooming graces, all unfelt, neglected, and despised, by a tasteless, cold, unimpassioned husband, while they might be all so much better employed to the purposes of ecstasy and bliss.

*Mrs. Love.* I am amazed, fir, at this liberty.—What action of my life has authorized this assurance?—I desire, fir, you will desist. Were I not afraid of the ill consequences that might follow, I should not hesitate a moment to acquaint Mr. Lovemore with your whole behaviour.

*Sir Bril.* She won't tell her husband!—A charming creature, and blessings on her for so convenient a hint. She yields, by all my hopes!—What shall I say to overwhelm her senses in a flood of nonsense?

[*Aside.*

*Go my heart's envoys, tender sighs make haste,—*

*Still drink delicious poisons from thy eye,—*

*Raptures and paradise*

*Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd.*

[Forcing her all this time.

*Enter Mr. LOVEMORE.*

*Love.* Hell and distraction! this is too much.

*Sir Bril.* What the devil's the matter now?  
[*Kneels down to buckle his shoe.*] This confounded buckle is always plaguing me. Lovemore, I rejoice to see thee.

[*Looking at each other.*

*Love.* And have you the confidence to look me in the face?

*Sir Bril.* I was telling your lady, here, of the most whimsical adventure—

*Love.* Don't add the meanness of falsehood to the black attempt of invading the happiness of your friend. I did imagine, fir, from the long intercourse that has subsisted between us, that you might have had delicacy enough, feeling enough, honour enough, fir, not to meditate an injury like this.

*Sir Bril.* Ay, it's all over, I am detected. [*Aside.* Mr. Lovemore, I feel that I have been wrong, and will not attempt a vindication of myself. We have been friends hitherto, and if begging your pardon for this rashness will any ways atone—

*Love.* No, fir, nothing can atone. The provocation you have given me would justify my drawing upon you this instant, did not that lady, and this roof, protect you.

*Sir Bril.* Harsh language to a friend—

*Love.* Friend, Sir Brilliant!

*Sir Bril.* If you will but hear me—

*Love.* Sir, I insist; I won't hear a word.

*Sir Bril.* I declare upon my honour—

*Love.* Honour! for shame, Sir Brilliant: honour and friendship are sacred words, and you profane them both.

*Sir Bril.* If imploring forgiveness of that lady—

*Love.* That lady!—I desire you will never speak to that lady.

*Sir Bril.* Can you command a moment's patience?

*Love.* Sir, I am out of all patience: this must be settled between us: I have done for the present.

*Enter Sir BASHFUL.*

*Sir Bash.* Did not I hear loud words among you? I certainly did. What are you quarrelling about?

*Love.* Read that, Sir Bashful. [*Gives him Sir Brilliant's letter.*] Read that, and judge if I have not cause—

[*Sir Bashful reads to himself.*]

*Sir Bril.* Hear but what I have to say—



*Love.* No, fir, no; we shall find a fitter time. As for you, madam, I am fatisfied with your conduct. I was indeed a little alarmed, but I have been a witness of your behaviour, and I am above harbouring low fufpicions.

*Sir Bafb.* Upon my word, Mr. Lovemore, this is carrying the jeft too far.

*Love.* It is the baselt action a gentleman can be guilty of; and to a person who never injured him, fill more criminal.

*Sir Bafb.* Why fo I think. Sir Brilliant, [*To him afide.*] here, take this letter, and read it to him, his own letter to my wife.

*Sir Bril.* Let me fee it— [*Takes the letter.*]

*Sir Bafb.* 'Tis indeed, as you fay, the vilelt action a gentleman can be guilty of.

*Love.* An unparalleled breach of friendship.

*Sir Bril.* Not altogether fo unparalleled: I believe it will not be found without a precedent—as for example— [*Reads.*]

*To my Lady CONSTANT——*

*‘Why fhould I conceal, my dear madam, that your charms have awaken’d my tenderelt paffion?’*

*Love.* Confufion!—my letter— [*Aside.*]

*Sir Bril.* [*Reading.*] *‘I long have loved you, long adored. Could I but flatter myfelf’—*

[*Lovemore walks about uneasy; fir Brilliant follows him.*]

*Sir Bafb.* There, Mr. Lovemore, the baselt treachery!

*Sir Bril.* [*Reads.*] *‘Could I but flatter myfelf with the leaft kind return.’*

*Love.* Confusion ! let me seize the letter out of his hand. [Snatches it from him.]

*Sir Bafb.* An unparalleled breach of friendship, Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* All a forgery, fir; all a forgery.

*Sir Bafb.* That I deny; it is the very identical letter my lady threw away with such indignation. She tore it in two, and I have pieced it together.

*Love.* A mere contrivance to varnish his guilt.

*Sir Bril.* Ha, ha ! my dear Lovemore, we know one another. Have not you been at the same work with the Widow Bellmour ?

*Love.* The Widow Bellmour !—If I spoke to her, it was to serve you, fir.

*Sir Bril.* Are you sure of that ?

*Love.* Po ! I won't stay a moment longer among ye. I'll go into another room to avoid ye all. I know little or nothing of the Widow Bellmour, fir.

[Opens the door.

*Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR.*

Hell and destruction !—what fiend is conjured up here ? Zoons ! let me make my escape out of the house. [Runs to the opposite door.

*Mrs. Love.* I'll secure this pass : you must not go, my dear.

*Love.* 'Sdeath, madam, give me way.

*Mrs. Love.* Nay, don't be in such a hurry : I want to introduce an acquaintance of mine to you.

*Love.* I desire, madam—

*Mrs. Bell.* My Lord, my Lord Etheridge ; I am heartily glad to see your lordship.

[Taking hold of him.

*Mrs. Love.* Do, my dear, let me introduce this lady to you. [Turning him to her.

*Love.* Here's the devil and all to do! [Aside.

*Mrs. Bell.* My Lord, this is the most fortunate encounter.

*Love.* I wish I was fifty miles off. [Aside.

*Mrs. Love.* Mrs. Bellmour, give me leave to introduce Mr. Lovemore to you. [Turning him to her.

*Mrs. Bell.* No, my dear ma'am, let me introduce Lord Etheridge to you. [Pulling him.] My Lord—

*Sir Bril.* In the name of wonder, what is all this?

*Sir Bask.* This is another of his intrigues blown up.

*Mrs. Love.* My dear ma'am, you are mistaken: this is my husband.

*Mrs. Bell.* Pardon me, ma'am, 'tis my Lord Etheridge.

*Mrs. Love.* My dear, how can you be so ill-bred in your own house?—Mrs. Bellmour,—this is Mr. Lovemore.

*Love.* Are you going to toss me in a blanket, madam?—call up the rest of your people, if you are.

*Mrs. Bell.* Pshaw! pr'ythee now, my lord, leave off your humours. Mrs. Lovemore, this is my Lord Etheridge, a lover of mine, who has made proposals of marriage to me.

*Love.* Confusion! let me get rid of these two furies. [Breaks away from them.

*Sir Bask.* He has been tampering with her too, has he?

*Mrs. Bell.* [*Follows him.*] My lord, I say! my Lord Etheridge! won't your lordship know me?

*Love.* This is the most damnable accident!

[*Aside.*

*Mrs. Bell.* I hope your lordship has not forgot your appointment at my house this evening.

*Love.* I deserve all this. [*Aside.*

*Mrs. Bell.* Pray, my lord, what have I done, that you treat me with this coldness? Come, come, you shall have a wife: I will take compassion on you.

*Love.* Damnation! I can't stand it. [*Aside.*

*Sir Bask.* Murder will out: murder will out.

*Mrs. Bell.* Come, cheer up, my lord: what the deuce, your dress is altered! what's become of the star and ribband? And so the gay, the florid, the *magnifique* Lord Etheridge dwindles down into plain Mr. Lovemore, the married man! Mr. Lovemore, your most obedient, very humble servant, sir.

*Love.* I can't bear to feel myself in so ridiculous a circumstance. [*Aside.*

*Sir Bask.* He has been passing himself for a lord, has he?

*Mrs. Bell.* I beg my compliments to your friend Mrs. Loveit: I am much obliged to you both for your very honourable designs. [*Curtseying to him.*

*Love.* I was never so ashamed in all my life!

*Sir Bril.* So, so, so, all his pains were to hide the star from me: This discovery is a perfect cordial to my dejected spirits.

*Mrs. Bell.* Mrs. Lovemore, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the providence that directed you to pay

me a visit, though I was wholly unknown to you; and I shall henceforth consider you as my deliverer.

*Love.* So! it was she that fainted away in the closet, and be damn'd to her jealousy. [*Aside.*]

*Sir Brill.* By, all that's whimsical, an odd sort of an adventure this! My lord, [*Advances to him.*] my lord, my Lord Etheridge, as the man says in the play, 'Your lordship is right welcome back to 'Denmark.'

*Love.* Now he comes upon me.—Oh! I'm in a fine situation. [*Aside.*]

*Sir Brill.* My lord, I hope that ugly pain in your lordship's side is abated.

*Love.* Absurd and ridiculous. [*Aside.*]

*Sir Brill.* There is nothing forming there, I hope, my lord.

*Love.* I shall come to an explanation with you, sir.

*Sir Brill.* The tennis-ball from Lord Racket's unlucky left hand.

*Love.* No more at present, Sir Brilliant. I leave you now to yourselves, and—[*Goes to the door in the back scene.*]—'sdeath, another fiend! I am beset by them.

*Enter Lady CONSTANT.*

No way to escape?—[*Attempts both stage doors, and is prevented.*]

*Lady Conf.* Mr. Lovemore, it is the luckiest thing in the world that you are come home.

*Love.* Ay, it is all over—all must come to light.

*Lady Conf.* I have lost every rubber; quite broke;



four by honours against me every time. Do, Mr. Lovemore, lend me another hundred.

*Love.* I would give an hundred pounds you were all in Lapland. [*Aside.*]

*Lady Conf.* Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, you are married to the falsest man; he has deceived me strangely.

*Mrs. Love.* I begin to feel for him, and to pity his uneasiness.

*Mrs. Bell.* Never talk of pity; let him be provoked to the quick.

*Sir Bash.* The case is pretty plain, I think, now, Sir Brilliant.

*Sir Brill.* Pretty plain, upon my soul! Ha! ha!

*Love.* I'll turn the tables upon Sir Bashful, for all this—[*Takes Sir Bashful's letter out of his pocket.*]  
—where is the mighty harm now in this letter?

*Sir Bash.* Where's the harm?

*Love.* [*Reads.*] 'I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold——'

*Sir Bash.* Shame and confusion! I am undone. [*Aside.*]

*Love.* Hear this, Sir Bashful—'The manifold vexations, of which, through a false prejudice, I am myself the occasion.'

*Lady Conf.* What is all this?

*Sir Bash.* I am a lost man. [*Aside.*]

*Love.* Mind, Sir Bashful.—'I am therefore resolved, after many conflicts with myself, to throw off the mask, and frankly own a passion, which the fear of falling into ridicule has, in appearance, suppressed.'

*Sir Bash.* 'Sdeath ! I'll hear no more of it.

[Snatches at the letter.

*Love.* No, fir; I resign it here, where it was directed; and with it, these notes which Sir Bashful gave me for your use.

*Lady Conf.* It is his hand sure enough.

*Love.* Yes, madam, and those are his sentiments, which he explained to me more at large.

*Lady Conf.* [Reads.] 'Accept the presents which I myself have sent you; money, attendance, equipage, and every thing else you shall command; and, in return, I shall only entreat you to conceal from the world that you have raised a flame in this heart, which will ever show me,

Your admirer,

And your truly affectionate husband,

BASHFUL CONSTANT.'

*All.* Ha! ha!—

*Sir Bril.* So, so, so! he has been in love with his wife all this time, has he? Sir Bashful, will you go and see the new comedy with me?

*Sir Bash.* I shall blush through the world all the rest of my life. [Aside.

*Sir Bril.* Lovemore, don't you think it a base thing to invade the happiness of a friend? or to do him a clandestine wrong? or to injure him with the woman he loves?

*Love.* To cut the matter short with you, fir, we have been traitors to each other; a couple of unprincipled, unreflecting profligates.

*Sir Bril.* Profligates?

*Love.* Ay! both! we are pretty fellows indeed!

*Mrs. Bell.* I am glad to find you are awakened to a sense of your error.

*Love.* I am, madam, and am frank enough to own it. I am above attempting to disguise my feelings, when I am conscious they are on the side of truth and honour. With the sincerest remorse I ask your pardon.—I should ask pardon of my Lady Constant too, but the fact is, Sir Bashful threw the whole affair in my way; and, when a husband will be ashamed of loving a valuable woman, he must not be surpris'd, if other people take her case into consideration, and love her for him.

*Sir Bril.* Why, faith, that does in some sort make his apology.

*Sir Bash.* Sir Bashful! Sir Bashful! thou art ruined. [*Aside.*

*Mrs. Bell.* Well, fir, upon certain terms, I don't know but I may sign and seal your pardon.

*Love.* Terms!—what terms?

*Mrs. Bell.* That you make due expiation of your guilt to that lady. [*Pointing to Mrs. Lovemore.*

*Love.* That lady, ma'am!—That lady has no reason to complain.

*Mrs. Love.* No reason to complain, Mr. Lovemore?

*Love.* No, madam, none; for whatever may have been my imprudences, they have had their source in your conduct.

*Mrs. Love.* In my conduct, fir?

*Love.* In your conduct:—I here declare before this company, and I am above misrepresenting the matter; I here declare, that no man in England could be better inclined to domestic happiness, if you, madam, on your part, had been willing to make home agreeable.

*Mrs. Love.* There, I confess, he touches me.

*[Aside.]*

*Love.* You could take pains enough before marriage; you could put forth all your charms; practise all your arts, and make your features please by rule; forever changing; running an eternal round of variety; and all this to win my affections: but when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping; never dressed, pensive, silent, melancholy; and the only entertainment in my house was the dear pleasure of a dull conjugal *tete-a-tete*: and all this insipidity, because you think the sole merit of a wife consists in her virtue: a fine way of amusing a husband, truly!

*Sir Brit.* Upon my soul and so it is—*[Laughing.]*

*Mrs. Love.* Sir, I must own there is too much truth in what you say. This lady has opened my eyes, and convinced me there was a mistake in my former conduct.

*Love.* Come, come, you need say no more. I forgive you; I forgive.

*Mrs. Love.* Forgive! I like that air of confidence, when you know that, on my side, it is, at worst, an error in judgment; whereas, on yours—

*Mrs. Bell.* Po! po! never stand disputing: you know each other's faults and virtues: you have nothing to do but to mend the former, and enjoy the latter. There, there, kifs and friends. There, Mrs. Lovemore, take your reclaimed libertine to your arms.

*Love.* 'Tis in your power, madam, to make a reclaimed libertine of me indeed.

*Mrs. Love.* From this moment it shall be our mutual study to please each other.

*Love.* A match with all my heart. I shall hereafter be ashamed only of my follies, but never ashamed of owning that I sincerely love you.

*Sir Bask.* Shan't you be ashamed?

*Love.* Never, sir.

*Sir Bask.* And will you keep me in countenance?

*Love.* I will.

*Sir Bask.* Give me your hand. I now forgive you all. My Lady Constant, I own the letter, I own the sentiments of it; [*Embraces her.*] and from this moment I take you to my heart.—Lovemore, zookers! you have made a man of me. Sir Brilliant, come; produce the buckles.

*Lady Conf.* If you hold in this humour, Sir Baskful, our quarrels are at an end.

*Sir Brill.* And now, I suppose, I must make restitution here— [*Gives Lady Constant the buckles.*]

*Sir Bask.* Ay, ay, make restitution. Lovemore! this is the consequence of his having some tolerable phrase, and a person, Mr. Lovemore! ha! ha!—

*Sir Brill.* Why, I own the laugh is against me. With all my heart; I am glad to see my friends happy at last. Lovemore, may I presume to hope for pardon at that lady's hands?

[*Points to Mrs. Lovemore.*]

*Love.* My dear confederate in vice, your pardon is granted. Two sad libertines we have been. But come, give us your hand: we have used each other scurvily: for the future we will endeavour to atone for the errors of our past misconduct.



*Sir Bril.* Agreed; we will henceforward behave like men, who have not forgot the obligations of truth and honour.

*Love.* And now I congratulate the whole company, that this business has had so happy a tendency to convince each of us of our folly.

*Mrs. Bell.* Pray, sir, don't draw me into a share of your folly.

*Love.* Come, come, my dear ma'am, you are not without your share of it. This will teach you, for the future, to be content with one lover at a time, without listening to a fellow you know nothing of, because he assumes a title, and spreads a fair report of himself.

*Mrs. Bell.* The reproof is just, I grant it.

*Love.* Come, let us join the company cheerfully, keep our own secrets, and not make ourselves the town-talk.

*Sir Bask.* Ay, ay; let us keep the secret.

*Love.* What, returning to your fears again? you will put me out of countenance, Sir Baskful.

*Sir Bask.* I have done.

*Love.* When your conduct is fair and upright, never be afraid of ridicule. Real honour and generous affection may bid defiance to all the small wits in the kingdom. In my opinion, were the business of this day to go abroad into the world, it might prove a very useful lesson: the men would see how their passions may carry them into the danger of wounding the bosom of a friend: and the ladies would learn, that, after the marriage rites are per-

formed, they ought not to suffer their powers of  
pleasing to languish away, but should still remember  
to sacrifice to the Graces.

*To win a man, when all your pains succeed,*

*The WAY TO KEEP HIM is a task indeed.*

[Exeunt omnes.]

---

SONG FOR MRS. CIBBER,

IN THE WAY TO KEEP HIM.

Written at the Revival of the Play, by Mr. GARRICK;

---

*THE fair married dames, who so often deplore,  
That a lover once blest, is a lover no more,  
Attend to my counsel, nor blush to be taught,  
That prudence must cherish what beauty has caught.*

*The bloom of your cheek, and the glance of your eye,  
Your roses and lilies, may make the men sigh:  
But roses, and lilies, and sighs pass away,  
And passion will die, as your beauties decay.*

*Use the man that you wed like your fav'rite guitar,  
Tho' music in both, they are both apt to jar;  
How tuneful and soft from a delicate touch,  
Not handled too roughly, nor play'd on too much.*

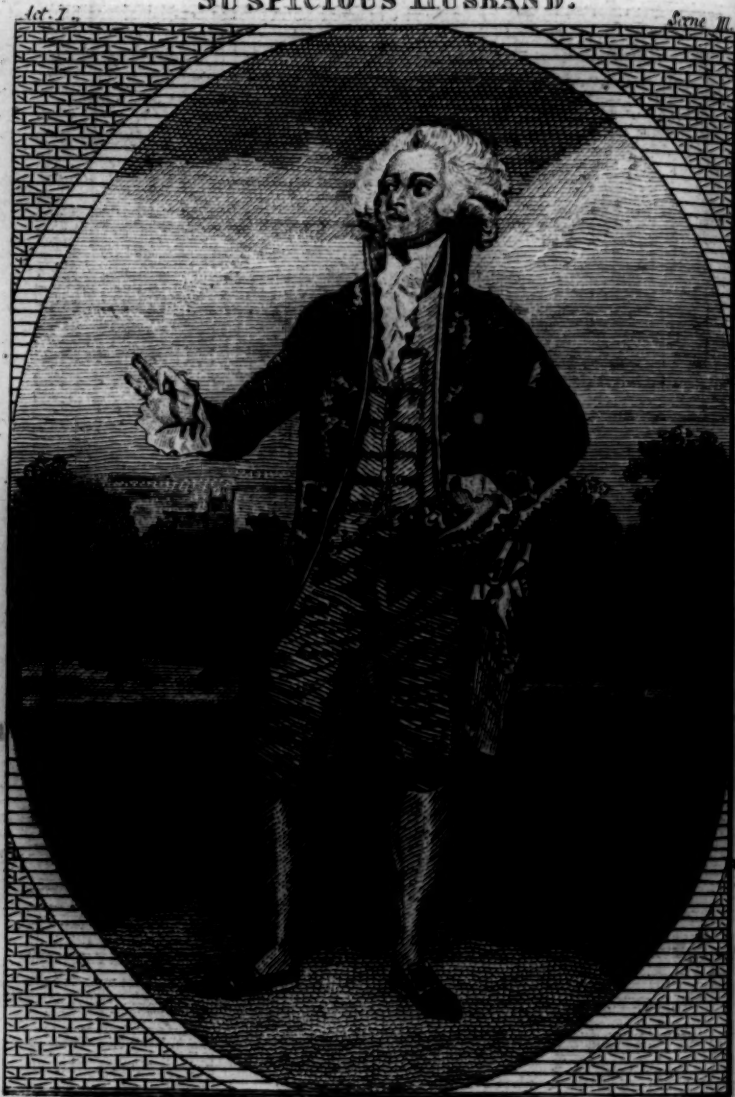
*The sparrow and linnet will feed from your hand,  
Grow tame by your kindness, and come at command:  
Exert with your husband the same happy skill,  
For hearts, like young birds, may be tam'd to your will.*

*Be gay and good-humour'd, complying and kind,  
Turn the chief of your care from your face to your mind;  
'Tis there that a wife may her conquests improve,  
And Hymen shall rivet the fetters of love.*





SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.



*De Wilde pinx.*

*Maguire sculp.*

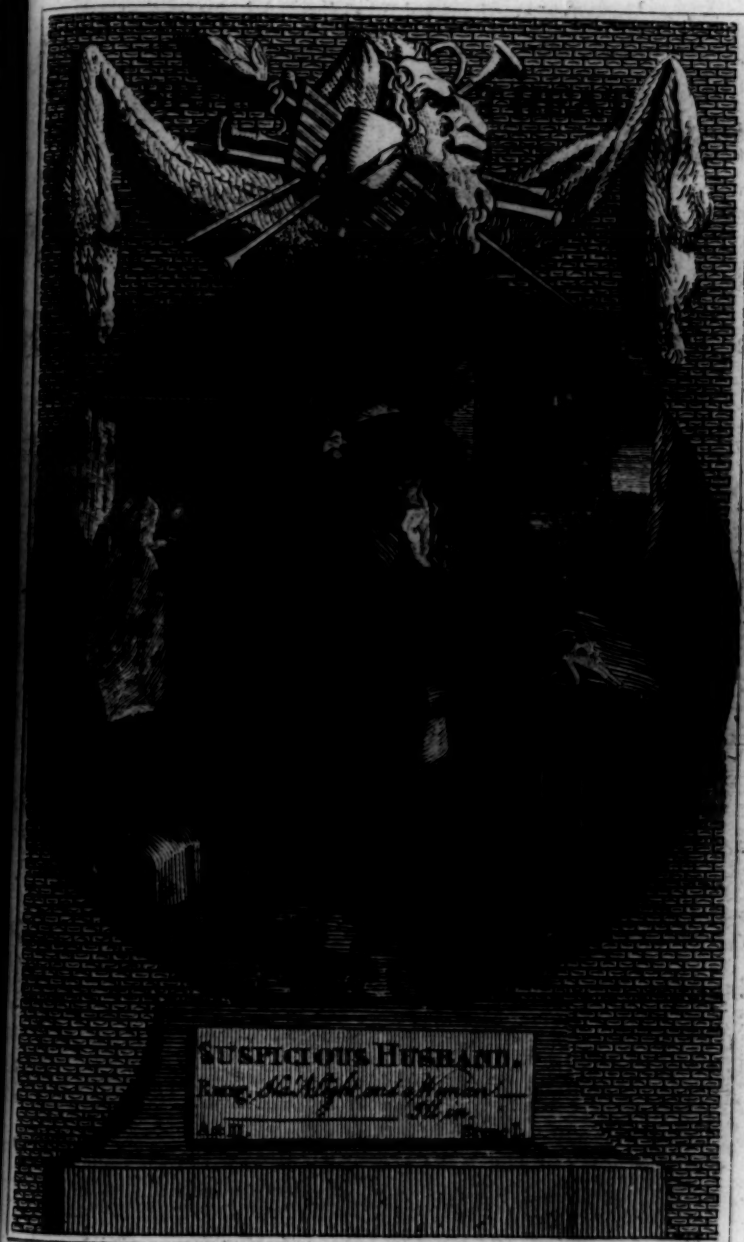
**M<sup>r</sup>. BERNARD as JACK MEGGOT.**

*Bel. Dead: pray who was the gentleman?*

*J. Meg. This gentleman was my monkey Sir*

Dublin, Published by W<sup>m</sup> Jones N<sup>o</sup> 86 Dame-Street.





*Currier print.*

*Maguire sculp.*

Dublin, Published by . W<sup>m</sup> Jones N<sup>o</sup> 86 Dame-street.



THE  
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

A  
COMEDY.

---

BY DR. HOADLY

---

(Benjamin)  
M.D., F.R.S.

ADAPTED FOR  
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE  
THEATRES-ROYAL,  
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

---

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

*By Permission of the Managers.*

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"The Lines distinguished by Inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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DUBLIN:

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PRINTED BY J. CHAMBERS,  
FOR WILLIAM JONES, No. 86, DAME-STREET.

M DCC XCIV.

THE  
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

COMEDY.

BY DR. H. O. A. D. Y.



REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

By James of the City.

PRINTED

FOR WILLIAM JONES, No. 25, DAME STREET.

W. B. D. 1855.

TO THE  
K I N G.

<sup>SIR,</sup>  
YOUR Majesty's goodness, in permitting your royal name to stand before the following piece, is an instance of the greatest condescension of a great mind. And this permission, after having honoured the performance of it with your royal presence, the more sensibly touches me, as it will naturally lead every one to this reflection, that so great an honour would not have been allowed it, had it not appeared free from all offence against the rules of good-manners and decency.

Thus, while your Majesty sits as a watchful arbiter of the greatest affairs that ever perplexed Europe, you can descend to the innocent amusements of life, and take a pleasure in favouring an attempt to add to their number.

We see, with joy, in your Majesty an undeniable proof, that the true greatness and lustre of a prince is founded, not upon the magnificence of pomp, and show, and power, but upon the whole tenor of a conduct formed for securing and confirming the rights and happiness of his subjects. This being built upon public facts, will always remain plainly legible in the annals



---

*of history, when the traces of the most delicate flattery shall be all lost and gone.*

---

*When the records of our country shall barely tell the world the glorious appearance in this nation, upon a late trying occasion, and say—That upon a violent attack made upon your crown, all orders and degrees, all sects and parties amongst us, rose up as one man; not contenting themselves to offer their lives and fortunes in the sounds of formal addresses; but actually pouring out their treasures, and hazarding their persons—That your whole people did not think themselves safe without your safety; nor their religion, laws, and property secure, but in the security of your royal person and government—When this shall be told—this alone, this voice of the public, expressed in deeds, will be the highest panegyric, greater and truer praise, than all the words which invention and art can put together—But I forgot myself and my duty.*

*I ought not, upon the present occasion, to interrupt your cares for the public any further than to express my deep sense of your royal favour and condescension; and to send up my warmest vows, that your Majesty may long enjoy the fruits of a conduct in government, which is the security to your subjects of all that is valuable upon earth; that you may live, through a course of many years, the delight of your happy people, the example, to all the princes around you, of political truth and justice, superior to all the little arts of fraud and perfidy; and that the succession to the crown*

DEDICATION.

of these realms, in your royal line, may never fail to  
establish and continue the blessings we enjoy to our latest  
posterity.

I am,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most devoted and

Obedient subject and servant,

**BENJAMIN HOADLY.**

---

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## PROLOGUE.

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---

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

---

*WHILE other culprits brave it to the last,  
Nor beg for mercy till the judgment's past ;  
Poets alone, as conscious of their crimes,  
Open their trials with imploring rhymes.  
Thus tramm'd with flattery and low submission,  
Each trite dull prologue is the bard's petition.  
A stale device to calm the critic's fury,  
And bribe at once the judges and the jury.*

*But what avail such poor repeated arts ?  
The whimp'ring scribbler ne'er can touch your hearts ;  
Nor ought an ill-tim'd pity to take place——  
Fast as they rise, destroy th' increasing race :  
The vermin else will run the nation o'er——  
By saving one you breed a million more.*

*Though disappointed authors rail and rage  
At fancy'd parties, and a senseless age,  
Yet still has justice triumph'd on the stage.  
Thus speaks and thinks the author of to-day,  
And, saying this, has little more to say.  
He asks no friend his partial zeal to show,  
Nor fears the groundless censures of a foe :  
He knows no friendship can protect the fool,  
Nor will an audience be a party's tool.*

*'Tis inconsistent with a free-born spirit,  
 To side with folly, or to injure merit.  
 By your decision he must fall or stand,  
 Nor, though he feels the lash, will blame the hand.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

				Men.
Mr. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	- Mr. Bensley.
FRANKLEY,	-	-	-	- Mr. Wroughton.
BELLAMY,	-	-	-	- Mr. Barrymore.
RANGER,	-	-	-	- Mr. Palmer.
JACK MEGGOT,	-	-	-	- Mr. Dodd.
BUCKLE,	-	-	-	- Mr. Benson.
TESTER,	-	-	-	- Mr. Burton.
Servant to Ranger,	-	-	-	- Mr. Phillimore.
SIMON,	-	-	-	- Mr. Banks.
				Women.
Mrs. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Kemble.
CLARINDA,	-	-	-	- Miss Farren.
JACINTHA,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Goodall.
LUCETTA,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Williams.
Landlady,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Booth.
Milliner,	-	-	-	- Miss Barnes.
Maid,	-	-	-	- Miss Heard.

COVENT-GARDEN.

				Men.
Mr. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	- Mr. Farren.
FRANKLY,	-	-	-	- Mr. Holman.
BELLAMY,	-	-	-	- Mr. Davies.
RANGER,	-	-	-	- Mr. Lewis.
JACK MEGGOT,	-	-	-	- Mr. Bernard.
BUCKLE,	-	-	-	- Mr. Thompson.
TESTER,	-	-	-	- Mr. Blanchard.
Servant to Ranger,	-	-	-	- Mr. Farley.
SIMON,	-	-	-	- Mr. Evatt.
				Women.
Mrs. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Merry.
CLARINDA,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Pope.
JACINTHA,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Wells.
LUCETTA,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Rock.
Landlady,	-	-	-	- Mrs. Platt.
Milliner,	-	-	-	- Miss Francis.
Maid,	-	-	-	- Miss Brangin.

Chairmen, Footmen, &c.  
SCENE, London.



THE  
**SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.**

**ACT I. SCENE I.**

*RANGER's Chambers in the Temple. A knocking is heard at the Door for some time ; when RANGER enters, having let himself in.*

*Ranger.*

ONCE more I am got safe to the Temple. Let me reflect a little. I have sat up all night: I have my head full of bad wine, and the noise of oaths, dice, and the damn'd tinkling of tavern bells; my spirits jaded, and my eyes sunk in my head; and all this for the conversation of a company of fellows I despise. Their wit lies only in obscenity, their mirth in noise, and their delight in a box and dice. Honest Ranger, take my word for it, thou art a mighty filly fellow.

*Enter a Servant with a wig dressed.*

Where have you been, rascal? If I had not had the key in my pocket, I must have waited at the door in this dainty drefs.

*Ser.* I was only below combing out your honour's wig.

*Ran.* Well, give me my cap.—[*Pulling off his wig.*] Why, how like a raking dog do you look, compared to that spruce, sober gentleman! Go, you batter'd devil, and be made fit to be seen.

[*Throwing his wig to the Servant.*]

*Serv.* Cod, my master's very merry this morning.  
[*Exit.*]

*Ran.* And now for the law. [*Sits down and reads.*]

“ Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd,  
That Chloe's false and common;  
By Heav'n I all along believ'd,  
She was a very woman.  
As such I lik'd, as such caress'd;  
She still was constant when possess'd:  
She could do more for no man.”

Honest Congreve was a man after my own heart.

*Servants pass over the Stage.*

Have you been for the money this morning, as I ordered you?

*Serv.* No, sir! You bade me go before you was up; I did not know your honour meant before you went to bed.

*Ran.* None of your jokes, I pray; but to business. Go to the coffee-house, and inquire if there has been any letter or message left for me.

*Serv.* I shall, sir.

*Ran.* [*Repeats.*]

"You think she's false, I'm sure she's a kind,  
I take her body, you her mind;  
Which has the better bargain?"  
Oh, that I had such a soft, deceitful-fair, to lull  
my senses to their desired sleep. [*Knocking at the  
door.*] Come in.

*Enter SIMON.*

Oh, Master Simon, is it you? How long have you  
been in town?

*Sim.* Just come, fir, and but for a little time nei-  
ther; and yet I have as many messages as if we  
were to stay the whole year round. Here they are,  
all of them. [*Pulls out a number of cards.*] and  
among them one for your honour.

*Ran.* [*Reads.*] "Clarinda's compliments to her  
cousin Ranger, and should be glad to see him for  
ever so little a time that he can be spared from the  
more weighty business of the law." Ha, ha, ha!  
the same merry girl I ever knew her.

*Sim.* My lady is never sad, fir. [*Knocking at the  
door.*]

*Ran.* Pr'ythee, Simon, open the door.

*Enter Milliner.*

Well, child—and who are you?—

*Mil.* Sir, my mistress gives her service to you,  
and has sent you home the linen you bespoke.

*Ran.* Well, Simon, my service to your lady, and  
let her know I will most certainly wait upon her,  
I am a little busy, Simon—and so—

*Sim.* Ah, you're a wag, Master Ranger, you're a wag—but mum for that. *[Exit.]*

*Ran.* I swear, my dear, you have the prettiest pair of eyes—the loveliest pouting lips—I never saw you before.

*Mil.* No, sir! I was always in the shop.

*Ran.* Were you so. Well, and what does your mistress say?—The devil fetch me, child, you looked so prettily, that I could not mind one word you said.

*Mil.* Lard, sir, you are such another gentleman! Why, she says, she is sorry she could not send them sooner. Shall I lay them down?

*Ran.* No, child. Give 'em to me—Dear little smiling angel— *[Catches and kisses her.]*

*Mil.* I beg, sir, you would be civil.

*Ran.* Civil! Egad, I think I am very civil.

*[Kisses her again.]*

*Enter a Servant, and BELLAMY.*

*Serv.* Sir, Mr. Bellamy.

*Ran.* Damn your impertinence—Oh, Mr. Bellamy, your servant.

*Mil.* What shall I say to my mistress?

*Ran.* Bid her make half a dozen more; but be sure you bring them home yourself. *[Exit Milliner.]* Pshaw! Pox! Mr. Bellamy, how should you like to be serv'd so yourself?

*Bel.* How can you, Ranger, for a minute's pleasure, give an innocent girl the pain of heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest blush upon her cheek convinces me she is honest.

*Ran.* May be so. I was resolv'd to try, however, *had you not interrupted the experiment.*

*Bel.* Fie, Ranger! will you never think?

*Ran.* Yes, but I can't be always a thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy, and without something now and then to amuse and relax, it would be too much for my brain, I promise ye——But I am a mighty sober fellow grown. Here have I been at it these three hours, but the wenches will never let me alone.

*Bel.* Three hours! Why, do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

*Ran.* Rat your inquisitive eyes. *Ex pede Herculem.* Egad, you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment return'd from the tavern. What, Frankly, here too!

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* My boy, Ranger, I am heartily glad to see you; Bellamy, let me embrace you; you are the person I want; I have been at your lodgings, and was directed hither.

*Ran.* It is to him then I am oblig'd for this visit: but with all my heart. He is the only man, to whom I don't care how much I am oblig'd.

*Bel.* Your humble servant, sir.

*Fran.* You know, Ranger, I want no inducement to be with you. But——you look sadly——What——no merciless jade has——has she?

*Ran.* No, no; sound as a roach, my lad. I only got a little too much liquor last night, which I have not slept off yet.



*Bel.* Thus, Frankly, it is every day. All the morning his head aches; at noon he begins to clear up; towards evening he is good company; and all night he is carefully providing for the same course the next day.

*Ran.* Why, I must own, my ghostly father, I did relapse a little last night, just to furnish out a decent confession for the day.

*Fran.* And he is now doing penance for it. Were you his confessor, indeed, you could not well desire more.

*Ran.* Charles, he sets up for a confessor with the worst grace in the world. Here has he been reproving me for being but decently civil to my milliner. Plague! because the coldness of his constitution makes him insensible of a fine woman's charms, every body else must be so too.

*Bel.* I am no less sensible of their charms than you are, though I cannot kiss every woman I meet, or fall in love, as you call it, with every face which has the bloom of youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your pleasures.

*Fran.* My dear friend, this is very pretty talking! But let me tell you, it is in the power of the very first glance from a fine woman utterly to disconcert all your philosophy.

*Bel.* It must be from a fine woman then, and not such as are generally reputed so. And it must be a thorough acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an impression on my heart.

*Ran.* Would I could see it once! For when a man has been all his life hoarding up a stock, with-

out allowing himself common necessities; it tickles me to the soul to see him lay it all out upon a wrong bottom, and become bankrupt at last.

*Bel.* Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the minute I find a woman capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, with good sense enough to be always easy, and good nature enough to like me, I will immediately put it to the trial, which of us shall have the greatest share of happiness from the sex, you or I.

*Ran.* By marrying her, I suppose! Capable of friendship, love and tenderness! ha, ha, ha! that a man of your sense should talk so. If she be capable of love, 'tis all I require of my mistress; and as every woman, who is young, is capable of love, I am very reasonably in love with every young woman I meet. My Lord Coke, in a case I read this morning, speaks my sense.

*Both.* My Lord Coke!

*Ran.* Yes, my Lord Coke. What he says of one woman, I say of the whole sex: "I take their bodies, you their minds: which has the better bargain?"

*Fran.* There is no arguing with so great a lawyer. Suppose, therefore, we adjourn the debate to some other time. I have some serious business with Mr. Bellamy, and you want sleep, I am sure.

*Ran.* Sleep! mere loss of time, and hinderance of business——We men of spirit, sir, are above it.

*Bel.* Whither shall we go?

*Fran.* Into the park. My chariot is at the door.

*Bel.* Then if my servant calls, you'll send him after us. *[Exeunt.]*

*Ran.* I will. *[Looking on the card.]* "Clarinda's compliments"—A pox of this head of mine; never once to ask where she was to be found. It's plain she is not one of us, or I should not have been so remiss in my inquiries. No matter: I shall meet her in my walks.

*Servant enters.*

*Serv.* There is no letter nor message, sir.

*Ran.* Then my things, to dress. *[Exeunt.]*  
*"I take her body, you her mind; which has the better bargain?"*

## SCENE II.

*A Chamber. Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND and JACINTHA, meeting.*

*Mrs. Str.* Good-morrow, my dear Jacintha.

*Jac.* Good-morrow to you, madam. I have brought my work, and intend to sit with you this morning. I hope you have got the better of your fatigue. Where is Clarinda? I should be glad if she wou'd come and work with us.

*Mrs. Str.* She work! she is too fine a lady to do any thing. She is not stirring yet—we must let her have her rest. People of her waste of spirits require more time to recruit again.

*Jac.* It is pity she should be ever tired with what

is so agreeable to every body else, I am prodigiously pleased with her company.

*Mrs. Str.* And when you are better acquainted, you will be still more pleased with her. You must rally her upon her partner at Bath; for I fancy part of her rest has been disturbed on his account.

*Jac.* Was he really a pretty fellow?

*Mrs. Str.* That I can't tell: I did not dance myself, and so did not much mind him. You must have the whole story from herself.

*Jac.* Oh, I warrant ye, I get it all out. None are so proper to make discoveries in love, as those who are in the secret themselves.

*Enter LUCETTA.*

*Luc.* Madam, Mr. Strickland is inquiring for you. Here has been Mr. Buckle with a letter from his master, which has made him very angry.

*Jac.* Mr. Bellamy said, indeed, he would try him once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Tell your master I am here. [*Exit Lucetta.*] What signifies fortune, when it only makes us slaves to other people?

*Mrs. Str.* Do not be uneasy, my Jacintha. You shall always find a friend in me: but as for Mr. Strickland, I know not what ill temper hangs about him lately. Nothing satisfies him. You saw how he received us when we came off our journey. Tho' Clarinda was so good company, he was barely civil to her, and downright rude to me.

*Jac.* I cannot help saying, I did observe it.

*Mrs. Str.* I saw you did. Hush! he's here.

*Enter Mr. STRICTLAND.*

*Strid.* Oh, your servant, madam! Here, I have received a letter from Mr. Bellamy, wherein he desires I would once more hear what he has to say. You know my sentiment; nay, so does he.

*Jac.* For Heaven's sake, consider, sir, this is no new affair, no sudden start of passion; we have known each other long. My father valued and loved him, and I am sure, were he alive, I should have his consent.

*Strid.* Don't tell me. Your father would not have you marry against his will: neither will I against mine: I am your father now.

*Jac.* And you take a fatherly care of me.

*Strid.* I wish I had never had any thing to do with you.

*Jac.* You may easily get rid of the trouble.

*Strid.* By listening, I suppose, to the young gentleman's proposals.

*Jac.* Which are very reasonable, in my opinion.

*Strid.* Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very modest gentleman he is that proposes them! A fool, to expect a lady of thirty thousand pounds fortune, should, by the care and prudence of her guardian, be thrown away upon a young fellow not worth three hundred a-year. He thinks being in love is an excuse for this; but I am not in love: what does he think will excuse me?

*Mrs. Str.* Well, but Mr. Strictland, I think the gentleman should be heard.



*Strid.* Well, well, seven o'clock's the time, and if the man has had the good fortune, since I saw him last, to persuade some body or other to give him a better estate, I give him my consent, not else. His servant waits below: you may tell him I shall be at home. [*Exit Jac.*] But where is your friend, your other half, all this while? I thought you could not have breath'd a minute without your Clarinda.

*Mrs. Str.* Why, the truth is, I was going to see what makes her keep her chamber so long.

*Strid.* Look ye, Mrs. Strickland, you have been asking me for money this morning. In plain terms, not one shilling shall pass through these fingers, till you have cleared my house of this Clarinda.

*Mrs. Str.* How can her innocent gaiety have offended you? she is a woman of honour, and has as many good qualities—

*Strid.* As women of honour generally have. I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

*Mrs. Str.* But, fir—

*Strid.* But, madam—Clarinda, nor e'er a rake of fashion in England, shall live in my family to debauch it.

*Mrs. Str.* Sir, she treated me with so much civility in the country, that I thought I could not do less than invite her to spend as much time with me in town as her engagements would permit. I little imagined you could have been displeased at my having so agreeable a companion.

*Strid.* There was a time when I was company enough for leisure hours.

*Mrs. Str.* There was a time when every word of mine was sure of meeting with a smile; but those happy days, I know not why, have long been over.

*Strid.* I cannot bear a rival even of your own sex. I hate the very name of female friends. No two of you can ever be an hour by yourselves, but one or both are the worse for it.

*Mrs. Str.* Dear Mr. Strickland—

*Strid.* This I know, and will not suffer.

*Mrs. Str.* It grieves me, sir, to see you so much in earnest: but to convince you how willing I am to make you easy in every thing, it shall be my request to her to remove immediately.

*Strid.* Do it—hark ye—your request?—Why yours? 'tis mine—my command—tell her so. I will be master of my own family, and I care not who knows it.

*Mrs. Str.* You fright me, sir—But it shall be as you please. [*In tears.*] [*Goes out.*]

*Strid.* Ha! have I gone too far? I am not master of myself. *Mrs. Strickland.* [*She returns.*] Understand me right. I do not mean, by what I have said, that I suspect your innocence, but by crushing this growing friendship all at once, I may prevent a train of mischief which you do not foresee. I was, perhaps, too harsh, therefore do it in your own way: but let me see the house fairly rid of her.

[*Exit Strid.*]

*Mrs. Str.* His earnestness in this affair amazes me; I am sorry I made this visit to Clarinda; and yet I'll answer for her honour. What can I say to her? Necessity must plead in my excuse—for at all events Mr. Strickland must be obeyed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

*St. James's Park. Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* Now, Bellamy, I may unfold the secret  
“of my heart to you with greater freedom; for  
“though Ranger has honour, I am not in a humour  
“to be laugh’d at. I must have one that will bear  
“with my impertinence, sooth me into hope, and,  
“like a friend indeed, with tenderness advise me.

*Bel.* I thought you appeared more grave than  
“usual.

*Fran.* Oh, Bellamy, my soul is full of joy, of  
“pain, hope, despair, and ecstasy, that no word  
“but love is capable of expressing what I feel.”

*Bel.* Is love the secret Ranger is not fit to hear?  
In my mind, he would prove the more able counsel-  
lor. And is all the gay indifference of my friend at  
last reduced to love?

*Fran.* Even so——Never was a prude more re-  
solute in chastity and ill-nature, than I was fixed  
in indifference: but love has rais’d me from that  
inactive state above the being of a man.

*Bel.* Faith, Charles, I begin to think it has: but  
pray bring this rupture into order a little, and tell  
me regularly, how, where, and when?

*Fran.* If I was not most unreasonably in love,  
those horrid questions would stop my mouth at once;  
but as I am armed against reason—I answer—at  
Bath, on Tuesday, she danced and caught me.

*Bel.* Danced!——and was that all? But who is  
she? what is her name? her fortune? where does  
she live?

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*Fran.* Hold! hold! not so many hard questions. Have a little mercy. I know but little of her, that's certain; but all I do know, you shall have. That evening was the first of her appearing at Bath; the moment I saw her, I resolv'd to ask the favour of her hand; but the easy freedom with which she gave it, and her unaffected good humour during the whole night, gained such a power over my heart, as none of her sex could ever boast before. I waited on her home, and the next morning, when I went to pay the usual compliments, the bird was flown; she had set out for London two hours before, and in a chariot and six, you rogue!

*Bel.* But was it her own, Charles?

*Fran.* That I don't know; but it looks better than being dragg'd to town in the stage. That day and the next I spent in inquiries. I waited on the ladies who came with her; they knew nothing of her. So without learning either her name or fortune, I e'en call'd for my boots, and rode post after her.

*Bel.* And how do you find yourself after your journey?

*Fran.* Why, as yet, I own, I am but on a cold scent: but a woman of her sprightliness and gentility cannot but frequent all public places: and when once she is found, the pleasure of the chase will overpay the pains of rousing her. Oh, Bellamy! there was something peculiarly charming in her, that seem'd to claim my further acquaintance; and if in the other more familiar parts of life she shines with that superior lustre, and at last I win her to

my arms, how shall I bless my resolution in pursuing her!

*Bel.* But if at last she should prove unworthy——

*Fran.* I would endeavour to forget her.

*Bel.* Promise me that, Charles, [*Takes his hand.*] and I allow——But we are interrupted.

*Enter JACK MEGGOT.*

*J. Meg.* Whom have we here? My old friend Frankly! thou art grown a mere antique since I saw thee. How hast thou done these five hundred years?

*Fran.* Even as you see me; well, and at your service ever.

*J. Meg.* Ha! who's that?

*Fran.* A friend of mine. Mr. Bellamy, this is Jack Meggot, sir, as honest a fellow as any in life.

*J. Meg.* Pho! prythee! pox! Charles——Don't be silly——Sir, I am your humble: any one who is a friend of my Frankly's, I am proud of embracing.

*Bel.* Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your civility.

*J. Meg.* Oh, sir!—Well, Charles; what, dumb? Come, come, you may talk, though you have nothing to say, as I do. Let us hear, where have you been?

*Fran.* Why, for this last week, Jack, I have been at Bath.

*J. Meg.* Bath! the most ridiculous place in life! amongst tradesmen's wives that hate their husbands, and people of quality that had rather go to the de-



vil than stay at home. People of no taste; no *goust*; and for *devertimenti*, if it were not for the puppet-show, *la vertu* would be dead amongst them. But the news, Charles; the ladies—I fear your time hung heavy on your hands, by the small stay you made there.

*Fran.* Faith, and so I did, Jack; the ladies are grown such idiots in love. The cards have so debauched their five senses, that love, almighty love himself, is utterly neglected.

*J. Meg.* It is the strangest thing in life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith, Charles, to tell you a secret, which I don't care if all the world knows, I am almost surfeited with the services of the ladies; the modest ones I mean. The vast variety of duties they expect, as dressing up to the fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable hours, drinking fashionable liquors, and fifty other such irregular niceties, so ruin a man's pocket and constitution, that 'foregad, he must have the estate of a duke, and the strength of a gondolier, who would list himself into their service.

*Fran.* A free confession truly, Jack, for one of your coat.

*Bel.* The ladies are obliged to you.

*Enter BUCKLE, with a Letter to BELLAMY.*

*J. Meg.* Oh, Lard, Charles! I have had the greatest misfortune in life since I saw you; poor Otho, that I brought from Rome with me, is dead.

*Fran.* Well, well, get you another, and all will be well again.

*J. Meg.* No; the rogue broke me so much china, and gnaw'd my Spanish leather shoes so filthily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

*Bel.* Exactly at seven! run back and assure him I will not fail. [*Exit Buckle.*] Dead! Pray, who was the gentleman?

*J. Meg.* This gentleman was my monkey, sir; an odd sort of a fellow that used to divert me, and pleased every body so at Rome, that he always made one in our *conversazioni*. But, Mr. Bellamy, I saw a servant, I hope no engagement, for you two positively shall dine with me: I have the finest *macaroni* in life. Oblige me so far.

*Bel.* Sir, your servant; what say you, Frankly?

*J. Meg.* Pho! pox! Charles, you shall go. My aunts think you begin to neglect them; and old maids, you know, are the most jealous creatures in life.

*Fran.* Ranger swears they can't be maids, they are so good-natured. Well, I agree, on condition I may eat what I please, and go away just when I will.

*J. Meg.* Ay, ay, you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? my post-chaise won't carry us all.

*Fran.* My chariot is here; and I will conduct Mr. Bellamy.

*Bel.* Mr. Meggot, I beg pardon; I can't possibly dine out of town; I have an engagement early in the evening.

*J. Meg.* Out of town! No, my dear, I live just by. I see one of the dilettanti I would not miss speaking to for the universe. And so I expect you at three. [Exit.

*Fran.* Ha, ha, ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty miles to go post for a spoonful of macaroni.

*Bel.* I suppose then he is just come out of the country.

*Fran.* Nor that neither. I would venture a wager, from his own house hither, or to an auction or two of old dirty pictures, is the utmost of his travels to-day; or he may have been in pursuit, perhaps, of a new cargo of Venetian tooth-picks."

*Bel.* A special acquaintance I have made to-day.

*Fran.* For all this, Bellamy, he has a heart worthy your friendship. He spends his estate freely, and you cannot oblige him more, than by shewing him how he can be of service to you.

*Bel.* Now you say something. It is the heart, Frankly, I value in a man.

*Fran.* Right—and there is a heart even in a woman's breast that is worth the purchase, or my judgment has deceived me. Dear Bellamy, I know your concern for me; see her first, and then blame me if you can.

*Bel.* So far from blaming you, Charles, that if my endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the bushes with you.

*Fran.* That I am afraid will not do. For you know less of her than I: but if in your walks you

meet a finer woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her. Wherefoe'er she is, she cannot long lie hid. [Exeunt.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

*St. James's Park. Enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and Mrs. STRICTLAND.*

*Jacinta.*

AY, ay; we both stand condemned out of our own mouths.

*Cla.* Why, I cannot but own, I never had a thought of any man that troubled me but him.

*Mrs. Str.* Then I dare swear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving Bath so soon.

*Cla.* Indeed you are mistaken. I have not had one scruple since.

*Jac.* Why, what one inducement can he have ever to think of you again?

*Cla.* Oh, the greatest of all inducements, curiosity: let me assure you, a woman's surest hold over a man is to keep him in uncertainty. As soon as ever you put him out of doubt, you put him out of your power: but when once a woman has awakened his curiosity, she may lead him a dance of many a troublesome mile, without the least fear of losing him at last.

*Jac.* Now do I heartily wish he may have spirit enough to follow, and use you as you deserve. Such a spirit, with but a little knowledge of our sex, might put that heart of yours into a strange flutter.

*Cla.* I care not how soon. I long to meet with such a fellow. Our modern beaux are such joint-babies in love, they have no feeling; they are entirely insensible either of pain or pleasure, but from their own dear persons; and according as we flatter, or affront their beauty, they admire or forsake ours: they are not worthy even of our displeasure; and, in short, abusing them is but so much ill-nature merely thrown away. But the man of sense, who values himself upon his high abilities; or the man of wit, who thinks a woman beneath his conversation—to see such the subjects of our power, the slaves of our frowns and smiles, is glorious indeed!

*Mrs. Str.* No man of sense, or wit either, if he be truly so, ever did, or ever can, think a woman of merit beneath his wisdom to converse with.

*Jac.* Nor will such a woman value herself upon making such a lover uneasy.

*Cla.* Amazing! Why, every woman can give ease. You cannot be in earnest.

*Mrs. Str.* I can assure you she is, and has put in practice the doctrine she has been teaching.

*Cla.* Impossible! Who ever heard the name of love mentioned without an idea of torment? But pray let us hear.

*Jac.* Nay, there is nothing to hear that I know of.

*Cla.* So I suspected, indeed. The novel is not likely to be long, when the lady is so well prepared for the *dénouement*.

*Jac.* The novel, as you call it, is not so short



as you may imagine. I and my spark have been long acquainted; as he was continually with my father, I soon perceived that he loved me; and the manner of his expressing that love was what pleased and won me most.

*Cla.* Well; and how was it? the old bait, flattery; dear flattery, I warrant ye.

*Jac.* No, indeed; I had not the pleasure of hearing my person, wit, and beauty painted out with forced praises; but I had a more sensible delight, in perceiving the drift of his whole behaviour was to make every hour of my time pass away agreeably.

*Cla.* The rustic! what, did he never say a handsome thing of your person?

*Mrs. Str.* He did, it seems, what pleas'd her better; he flatter'd her good sense, as much as a less cunning lover would have done her beauty.

*Cla.* On my conscience you are well match'd.

*Jac.* So well, that if my guardian denies me happiness (and this evening he is to pass his final sentence), nothing is left but to break my prison, and fly into my lover's arms for safety.

*Cla.* Heyday! O' my conscience thou art a brave girl. Thou art the very first prude that ever had honesty enough to avow her passion for a man.

*Jac.* And thou art the first finish'd coquette who ever had any honesty at all.

*Mrs. Str.* Come, come; you are both too good for either of those characters.

*Cla.* And my dear Mrs. Strickland here, is the first young married woman of spirit who has an ill-natured fellow for a husband, and never once thinks

of using him as he deserves——Good Heaven! If I had such a husband——

*Mrs. Str.* You would be just as unhappy as I am!

*Cla.* But come now, confess——do not you long to be a widow?

*Mrs. Str.* Would I were any thing but what I am!

*Cla.* Then go the nearest way about it. I'd break that stout heart of his in less than a fortnight. I'd make him know——

*Mrs. Str.* Pray be silent. You know my resolution.

*Cla.* I know you have no resolution.

*Mrs. Str.* You are a mad creature, but I forgive you.

*Cla.* It is all meant kindly, I assure you. But since you won't be persuaded to your good; I will think of making you easy in your submission, as soon as ever I can. I dare say, I may have the same lodging I had last year: I can know immediately—I see my chair: and so, ladies both, adieu.

[Exit.]

*Jac.* Come, Mrs. Strickland, we shall but just have time to get home before Mr. Bellamy comes.

*Mrs. Str.* Let us return then to our common prison. You must forgive my ill-nature, Jacintha, if I almost wish Mr. Strickland may refuse to join your hand where your heart is given.

*Jac.* Lord, madam, what do you mean?

*Mrs. Str.* Self-interest only, child. Methinks

your company in the country would soften all my sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

*Re-enter CLARINDA.*

*Cla.* Dear Mrs. Strickland—I am so confus'd, and so out of breath—

*Mrs. Str.* Why, what's the matter?

*Jac.* I protest you fright me.

*Cla.* Oh! I have no time to recover myself, I am so frighten'd, and so pleas'd. In short, then, the dear man is here.

*Mrs. Str.* Here—Lord—Where?

*Cla.* I met him this instant; I saw him at a distance, turn'd short, and ran hither directly. Let us go home.—I tell you he follows me.

*Mrs. Str.* Why, had you not better stay, and let him speak to you?

*Cla.* Ay!—But then—he won't know where I live, without my telling him.

*Mrs. Str.* Come then. Ha, ha, ha!

*Jac.* Ay, poor Clarinda!—*Allons donc.* [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* Sure that must be she! her shape and easy air cannot be so exactly copied by another. Now, you young rogue, Cupid, guide me directly to her, as you would the surest arrow in your quiver. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

*Changes to the Street before Mr. Strickland's door.*

*Re-enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and Mrs. STRICTLAND.*

*Cla.* Lord!—Dear Jacintha—for Heaven's sake make haste: he'll overtake us before we get in.

*Jac.* Overtake us! why, he is not in sight.

*Cla.* Is not he? Ha! Sure I have not dropt my twee—I would not have him lose sight of me neither.

*[Aside.*

*Mrs. Str.* Here he is——

*Cla.* In——In——In then.

*Jac.* *[Laughing.]* What, without your twee?

*Cla.* Pshaw! I have lost nothing——In, in, I'll follow you. *[Exeunt into the house, Clarinda last.*

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* It is impossible I shou'd be deceiv'd. My eyes, and the quick pulses at the heart, assure me it is she. Ha! 'tis she, by Heav'n! and the door left open too——A fair invitation, by all the rules of love.

*[Exit.*

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SCENE III.

*Changes to an Apartment in Mr. Strickland's House.*

*Enter CLARINDA, FRANKLY following her.*

*Fran.* I hope, madam, you will excuse the boldness of this intrusion, since it is owing to your own behaviour that I am forc'd to it.

*Cla.* To my behaviour, fir.

*Fran.* You cannot but remember me at Bath, madam, where I so lately had the favour of your hand.

*Cla.* I do remember, fir; but I little expected any wrong interpretation of my behaviour from one who had so much the appearance of a gentleman.

*Fran.* What I saw of your behaviour was so just, it would admit of no misrepresentation. I only feared, whatever reason you had to conceal your name from me at Bath, you might have the same to do it now; and though my happiness was so nearly concerned, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

*Cla.* Sir, there seems to be so much civility in your rudeness, that I can easily forgive it; though I don't see how your happiness is at all concerned.

*Fran.* No, madam! I believe you are the only lady, who could, with the qualifications you are mistress of, be insensible of the power they give you over the happiness of our sex.

*Cla.* How vain should we women be, if you gentlemen were but wise! If you did not all of you say the same things to every woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

*Fran.* Could you have the least sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the dictates of a heart that admires you; may I not say that—

*Cla.* Sir, this is carrying the—

*Fran.* When I danced with you at Bath, I was charmed with your whole behaviour, and felt the



same tender admiration! but my hope of seeing you afterwards, kept in my passion till a more proper time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable modesty to prevent my making use of this second opportunity.

*Cla.* This behaviour, sir, is so different from the gaiety of your conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

*Fran.* There is nothing, madam, which could take off from the gaiety with which your presence inspires every heart, but the fear of losing you. How can I be otherwise than as I am, when I know not but you may leave London as abruptly as you did Bath?

*Enter LUCETTA.*

*Luc.* Madam, the tea is ready, and my mistress waits for you.

*Cla.* Very well, I come—[*Exit Lucetta.*] You see, sir, I am called away: but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an assurance that the business, which brings me to town, will keep me here some time.

*Fran.* How generous it is in you thus to ease the heart, that knew not how to ask for such a favour—I fear to offend—But this house, I suppose, is yours?

*Cla.* You will hear of me, if not find me here.

*Fran.* I then take my leave. [*Exit.*]

*Cla.* I'm undone!—He has me!

*Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND.*

*Mrs. Str.* Well; how do you find yourself?

*Cla.* I do find—that if he goes on as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least uneasiness.

*Mrs. Str.* A very terrible prospect, indeed!

*Cla.* But I must tease him a little—Where is Jacintha? how will she laugh at me, if I become a pupil of her's, and learn to give ease! No; positively I shall never do it.

*Mrs. Str.* Poor Jacintha has met with what I feared from Mr. Strictland's temper; an utter denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natur'd.

*Cla.* Well; now do I heartily wish my affairs were in his power a little, that I might have a few difficulties to surmount: I love difficulties; and yet, I don't know—it is as well as it is.

*Mrs. Str.* Ha, ha, ha! Come, the tea waits.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter Mr. STRICTLAND.*

*Stricd.* These doings in my house distract me. I met a fine gentleman: when I enquired who he was; why, he came to Clarinda. I met a footman too, and he came to Clarinda. I shall not be easy till she is decamp'd. My wife had the character of a virtuous woman—and they have not been long acquainted: but then they were by themselves at Bath—that hurts—that hurts—they must be watch'd, they must; I know them, I know all their

wiles, and the best of them are but hypocrites—  
Ha!—[*Lucetta passes over the stage.*] Suppose I  
bribe the maids: she is of their council, the mana-  
ger of their secrets: it shall be so; money will do  
it, and I shall know all that passes. Lucetta!

*Luc.* Sir.

*Stria.* Lucetta!

*Re-enter LUCETTA.*

*Luc.* Sir. If he should suspect, and search me  
now, I'm undone. [*Aside.*

*Stria.* She is a fly girl, and may be serviceable.  
[*Aside.*] Lucetta, you are a good girl, and have an  
honest face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no  
deceit in it—Yet, if she should be false, she can  
do me most harm. [*Aside.*

*Luc.* Pray, sir, speak out.

*Stria.* [*Aside.*] No; she is a woman, and it is  
the highest imprudence to trust her.

*Luc.* I am not able to understand you.

*Stria.* I am glad of it. I would not have you  
understand me.

*Luc.* Then what did you call me for?—If he  
should be in love with my face, it would be rare  
sport. [*Aside.*

*Stria.* Tester, ay, Tester is the proper person.  
[*Aside.*] Lucetta, tell Tester I want him.

*Luc.* Yes, sir. Mighty odd, this! It gives me  
time, however, to send Buckle with this letter to  
his master. [*Aside. Exit.*

*Stria.* Could I be but once well satisfied that my  
wife had really finished me, I believe I should be

as quiet as if I were sure to the contrary : but whilst I am in doubt, I am miserable.

*Enter TESTER.*

*Test.* Does your honour please to want me?

*Striā.* Ay, Tester—I need not fear. The honesty of his service, and the goodness of his look, make me secure. I will trust him. [*Aside.*] Tester, I think I have been a tolerable good master to you.

*Test.* Yes, fir—very tolerable.

*Striā.* I like his simplicity well. It promises honesty. [*Aside.*] I have a secret, Tester, to impart to you ; a thing of the greatest importance. Look upon me, and don't stand picking your fingers.

*Test.* Yes, fir.—No, fir.

*Striā.* But will not his simplicity expose him the more to Lucetta's cunning? Yes, yes; she will worm the secret out of him. I had better trust her with it at once.—So—I will. [*Aside.*] Tester, go, send Lucetta hither.

*Test.* Yes, fir—Here she is.

*Re-enter LUCETTA.*

Lucetta, my master wants you.

*Striā.* Get you down, Tester.

*Test.* Yes, fir.

[*Exit.*

*Luc.* If you want me, fir, I beg you would make haste, for I have a thousand things to do.

*Striā.* Well, well ; what I have to say will not take up much time, could I but persuade you to be honest.

*Luc.* Why, fir, I hope you don't suspect my honesty?

*Strið.* Well, well : I believe you honest.

[*Shuts the door.*]

*Luc.* What can be at the bottom of all this?

[*Aside.*]

*Strið.* So; we cannot be too private. Come hither, huffy; nearer yet.

*Luc.* Lord, fir! You are not going to be rude. I vow I will call out.

*Strið.* Hold your tongue—Does the baggage laugh at me? She does; she mocks me, and will reveal it to my wife; and her insolence upon it will be more insupportable to me than cuckoldom itself. [*Aside.*] I have not leisure now, Lucetta—Some other time—Hush! did not the bell ring? Yes, yes; my wife wants you. Go, go, go to her. [*Pushes her out.*] There is no hell on earth like being a slave to suspicion. [*Exit.*]

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#### SCENE IV.

*The Piazza, Covent-Garden. Enter BELLAMY and JACK MEGGOT.*

*Bel.* Nay, nay, I would not put your family into any confusion.

*J. Meg.* None in life, my dear, I assure you. I will go and order every thing this instant for her reception.

*Bel.* You are too obliging, fir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no certainty when I



shall trouble you; I only know that my Jacintha has taken such a resolution.

*J. Meg.* Therefore we should be prepared; for when once a lady has such a resolution in her head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. 'Foregad, Mr. Bellamy, this must be a girl of fire.

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* "Buxom and lively as the bounding doe—  
"Fair as painting can express, or youthful poets  
"fancy when they love." Tol, de rol, lol!

*[Singing and dancing.]*

*Bel.* Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

*Fran.* Who should it be, but—I shall know her name to-morrow. *[Sings and dances.]*

*J. Meg.* What is the matter, ho? Is the man mad?

*Fran.* Even so, gentlemen; as mad as love and joy can make me.

*Bel.* But inform us whence this joy proceeds.

*Fran.* Joy! joy! my lads! She's found! my Perdita! my charmer!

*J. Meg.* Egad! her charms have bewitch'd the man, I think——But who is she?

*Bel.* Come, come, tell us, who is this wonder?

*Fran.* But will you say nothing?

*Bel.* Nothing, as I live.

*Fran.* Nor you?

*J. Meg.* I'll be as silent as the grave——

*Fran.* With a tomb-stone upon it, to tell every one whose dust it carries.

*J. Meg.* I'll be as secret as a debauched prude——

*Fran.* Whose sanctity every one suspects. Jack, Jack, 'tis not in thy nature; keeping a secret is worse to thee than keeping thy accounts. But to leave fooling, listen to me both, that I may whisper it into your ears, that echo may not catch the sinking sound—I cannot tell who she is, 'faith—Tol de rol, lol—

*J. Meg.* Mad! mad! very mad!

*Fran.* All I know of her is, that she is a charming woman, and has given me liberty to visit her again—Bellamy, 'tis she, the lovely she. [*Aside.*

*Bel.* So I did suppose. [*To Frankly.*

*J. Meg.* Poor Charles! for Heaven's sake, Mr. Bellamy, persuade him to go to his chamber, whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu. [*Aside to Bellamy.*] B'ye Charles; ha, ha, ha!

*Fran.* Oh, love! thou art a gift worthy of a god, indeed! dear Bellamy, nothing now could add to my pleasure, but to see my friend as deep in love as I am.

*Bel.* I shew my heart is capable of love, by the friendship it bears to you.

*Fran.* The light of friendship looks but dim before the brighter flame of love: love is the spring of cheerfulness and joy. Why, how dull and phlegmatic do you shew to me now? whilst I am all life; light as feather'd Mercury—You, dull and cold as earth and water; I, light and warm as air and fire.—These are the only elements in love's world! Why, Bellamy, for shame! get thee a mistress, and be sociable.

*Bel.* Frankly, I am now going to—

*Fran.* Why that face now? Your humble servant, sir. My flood of joy shall not be stopp'd by your melancholy fits, I assure you. [*Going.*]

*Bel.* Stay, Frankly, I beg you stay. What would you say now if I really were in love?

*Fran.* Why, faith, thou hast such romantic notions of sense and honour, that I know not what to say.

*Bel.* To confess the truth then, I am in love.

*Fran.* And do you confess it as if it were a sin? Proclaim it aloud; glory in it; boast of it as your greatest virtue. Swear it with a lover's oath, and I will believe you.

*Bel.* Why then, by the bright eyes of her I love—

*Fran.* Well said!

*Bel.* By all that's tender, amiable, and soft in woman—

*Fran.* Bravo!

*Bel.* I swear, I am as true an enamorado as ever tagg'd rhyme.

*Fran.* And art thou then thoroughly in love? Come to my arms thou dear companion of my joys— [*They embrace.*]

*Enter RANGER.*

*Ran.* Why—Hey!—is there never a wench to be got for love or money?

*Bel.* Pshaw! Ranger here?

*Ran.* Yes, Ranger is here, and perhaps does not come so impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out secrets. Nay, never look so queer—Here is a letter, Mr. Bel—

lamy, that seems to promise you better diversion than your hugging one another.

*Bel.* What do you mean?

*Ran.* Do you deal much in these paper tokens?

*Bel.* Oh, the dear kind creature! it is from herself. [To Frankly.

*Ran.* Why, is it a pair of laced shoes she wants? or have the boys broke her windows?

*Bel.* Hold your profane tongue!

*Fran.* Nay, pr'ythee, Bellamy, don't keep it to yourself, as if her whole affections were contain'd in those few lines.

*Ran.* Pr'ythee, let him alone to his silent raptures. But it is as I always said—your grave men ever are the greatest whoremasters.

*Bel.* I cannot be disobligh'd now, say what you will. But how came this into your hands?

*Ran.* Your servant Buckle and I changed commissions; he went on my errand, and I came on his.

*Bel.* 'Sdeath! I want him this very instant.

*Ran.* He will be here presently; but I demand to know what I have brought you?

*Fran.* Ay, ay! out with it! you know we never blab, and may be of service.

*Bel.* Twelve o'clock! oh, the dear hour!

*Ran.* Why, it is a pretty convenient time, indeed.

*Bel.* By all that's happy, she promises in this letter here—to leave her guardian this very night—and run away with me.

*Ran.* How is this?

*Bel.* Nay, I know not how myself—she says at the bottom—“Your servant has full instructions from Lucetta how to equip me for my expedition. I will not trust myself home with you to-night, because I know it is inconvenient; therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging, it is no matter how far off my guardian’s— Yours,

JACINTHA.”

*Ran.* Carry her to a bagnio, and there you may lodge with her.

*Fran.* Why, this must be a girl of spirit, faith!

*Bel.* And beauty equal to her sprightliness. I love her, and she loves me. She has thirty thousand pounds to her fortune.

*Ran.* The devil she has!

*Bel.* And never plays at cards.

*Ran.* Nor does any one thing like any other woman, I suppose.

*Fran.* Not so, I hope, neither.

*Bel.* Oh, Frankly, Ranger, I never felt such ease before! the secret’s out, and you don’t laugh at me.

*Fran.* Laugh at thee, for loving a woman with thirty thousand pounds? thou art a most unaccountable fellow.

*Ran.* How the devil could he work her up to this! I never could have had the face to have done it. But—I know not how—there is a degree of assurance in you modest gentlemen, which we impudent fellows never can come up to.

*Bel.* Oh! your servant, good sir. You should not abuse me now, Ranger, but do all you can to assist me.



*Ran.* Why look ye, Bellamy, I am a damnable unlucky fellow, and so will have nothing to do in this affair: I'll take care to be out of the way, so as to do you no harm; that's all I can answer for; and so—success attend you. [*Going.*] I cannot leave you quite to yourself neither; for if this should prove a round-house affair, as I make no doubt it will, I believe I may have more interest there than you; and so, sir, you may hear of me at—— [*Whispers.*

*Bel.* For shame, Ranger! the most noted gaming-house in town.

*Ran.* Forgive me this once, my boy. I must go, faith, to pay a debt of honour to some of the greatest rascals in town.

*Fran.* But where do you design to lodge her?

*Bel.* At Mr. Meggot's——He is already gone to prepare for her reception.

*Fran.* The properest place in the world: his aunts will entertain her with honour.

*Bel.* And the newness of her acquaintance will prevent its being suspected.—Frankly, give me your hand: this is a very critical time.

*Fran.* Pho! none of your musty reflections now! When a man is in love, to the very brink of matrimony, what the devil has he to do with Plutarch and Seneca? Here is your servant, with a face full of business—I'll leave you together—I shall be at the King's Arms, where, if you want my assistance, you may find me. [*Exit.*

*Enter* BUCKLE.

*Bel.* So, Buckle, you seem to have your hands full.

*Buc.* Not fuller than my head, fir, I promise you. You have had your letter, I hope.

*Bel.* Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my instructions.

*Buc.* Why, the affair stands thus.—As Mr. Strictland fees the door lock'd and barred every night himself, and takes the key up with him, it is impossible for us to escape any way but through the window; for which purpose I have a ladder of ropes.

*Bel.* Good—

*Buc.* And because a hoop, as the ladies wear them now, is not the most decent dress to come down a ladder in, I have, in this other bundle, a suit of boy's clothes, which I believe will fit her; at least, it will serve the time she wants it.—You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

*Bel.* Why, you are in spirits, you rogue.

*Buc.* These I am now to convey to Lucetta—Have you any thing to say, fir?

*Bel.* Nothing, but that I will not fail at the hour appointed. Bring me word to Mr. Meggot's how you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your fortune.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

*The Street before Mr. STRICTLAND's House. Enter BELLAMY in a Chairman's coat.*

*Bellamy.*

How tediously have the minutes pass'd these last few hours! and the envious rogues will fly, no lightning quicker, when we would have them stay.—Hold, let me not mistake—this is the house. [*Pulls out his watch.*] By heaven it is not yet the hour!—I hear somebody coming. The moon's so bright—I had better not be here till the happy instant comes. [*Exit.*]

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* Wine is no antidote to love, but rather feeds the flame: Now am I such an amorous puppy, that I cannot walk straight home, but must come out of my way to take a view of my queen's palace by moonlight—Ay, here stands the temple where my goddess is adored—the doors open! [*Retires.*]

*Enter LUCETTA.*

*Luc.* [*Under the window.*] Madam, madam, hift! madam—How shall I make her hear?

*JACINTHA in Boy's clothes at the window.*

*Jac.* Who is there? What's the matter?

*Luc.* It is I, madam: you must not pretend to stir till I give the word; you'll be discovered if you do—

*Fran.* [*Aside.*] What do I see? A man! My heart misgives me.

*Luc.* My master is below, sitting up for Mrs. Clarinda. He raves as if he were mad about her being out so late.

*Fran.* [*Aside.*] Here is some intrigue or other. I must see more of this before I give further way to love.

*Luc.* One minute he is in the street: the next he is in the kitchen: now he will lock her out, and then he'll wait himself, and see what figure she makes when she vouchsafes to venture home.

*Jac.* I long to have it over. Get me but once out of his house.

*Fran.* [*Aside.*] Cowardly rascal! would I were in his place!

*Luc.* If I can but fix him any where, I can let you out myself—You have the ladder ready in case of necessity.

*Jac.* Yes, yes.

[*Exit Luc.*]

*Fran.* [*Aside.*] The ladder! This must lead to some discovery: I shall watch you, my young gentleman, I shall.

*Enter CLARINDA, and Servant.*

*Cla.* This whist is a most enticing devil. I am afraid I'm too late for Mr. Strickland's sober hours.

*Jac.* Ha! I hear a noise.

*Cla.* No; I see a light in Jacintha's window. You may go home. [*Giving the servant money.*] I am safe.

*Jac.* Sure it must be he! Mr. Bellamy—Sir.

*Fran.* [*Afide.*] Does not he call me?

*Cl.* [*Afide.*] Ha! Who's that? I am frightened out of my wits—A man!

*Jac.* Is it you?

*Fran.* Yes, yes; 'tis I, 'tis I.

*Jac.* Listen at the door.

*Fran.* I will; 'tis open—There is no noise: all's quiet.

*Cl.* Sure it is my spark—and talking to Jacintha. [*Afide.*]

*Fran.* You may come down the ladder—quick.

*Jac.* Catch it then, and hold it.

*Fran.* I have it. Now I shall see what sort of mettle my young spark is made of. [*Afide.*]

*Cl.* With a ladder too! I'll assure you. But I must see the end of it. [*Afide.*]

*Jac.* Hark! did not somebody speak?

*Fran.* No, no; be not fearful—'Sdeath! we are discover'd. [*Frankly and Clarinda retire.*]

*Enter LUCETTA.*

*Luc.* Hift! hift! are you ready?

*Jac.* Yes, may I venture?

*Luc.* Now is your time. He is in high conference with his privy counsellor, Mr. Tester. You may come down the back stairs, and I'll let you out.

[*Exit Lucetta.*]

*Jac.* I will, I will, and am heartily glad of it.

[*Exit Jac.*]

*Fran.* [*Advancing.*] May be so; but you and I shall have a few words before you get off so cleanly.

*Cl.* [*Advancing.*] How lucky it was I came



home at this instant. I shall spoil his sport I believe. Do you know me, fir?

*Fran.* I am amazed! You here! This was unexpected indeed!

*Cla.* Why, I believe, I do come a little unexpectedly, but I shall amaze you more. I know the whole course of your amour: all the process of your mighty passion from its first rise——

*Fran.* What is all this!

*Cla.* To the very conclusion, which you vainly hope to effect this night.

*Fran.* By Heaven, madam, I know not what you mean! I came hither purely to contemplate on your beauties.

*Cla.* Any beauties, fir, I find will serve your turn. Did I not hear you talk to her at the window?

*Fran.* Her!

*Cla.* Blush, blush, for shame; but be assur'd you have seen the last both of Jacintha and me. [*Exit.*]

*Fran.* Jacintha! hear me, madam—She is gone. This must certainly be Bellamy's mistress, and I have fairly ruined all his scheme. This it is to be in luck.

*Enter BELLAMY, behind.*

*Bel.* Ha! a man under the window!

*Fran.* No, here she comes, and I may convey her to him.

*Enter JACINTHA, and runs to FRANKLY.*

*Jac.* I have at last got to you. Let's haste away—Oh!

*Fran.* Be not frighten'd, lady.

*Jac.* Oh! am I abus'd! betray'd!

*Bel.* Betray'd!—Frankly.

*Fran.* Bellamy!

*Bel.* I can scarce believe it, though I see it.

Draw—

*Fran.* Hear me, Bellamy—Lady—

*Jac.* Stay—do not fight!

*Fran.* I am innocent; it is all a mistake!

*Jac.* For my sake, be quiet! We shall be discovered! the family is alarm'd!

*Bel.* You are obeyed. Mr. Frankly, there is but one way—

*Fran.* I understand you. Any time but now. You will certainly be discovered! To-morrow at your chambers.

*Bel.* Till then, farewell. [*Exeunt Bel. and Jac.*]

*Fran.* Then, when he is cool, I may be heard; and the real, though suspicious, account of this matter may be believed. Yet, amidst all this perplexity, it pleases me to find my fair incognita is jealous of my love.

*Strið.* [*Wubin.*] Where's Lucetta? Search every place.

*Fran.* Hark! the cry is up! I must be gone.

[*Exit Fran.*]

*Enter Mr. STRICTLAND, TESTER, and Servants.*

*Strið.* She's gone! she's lost! I am cheated! pursue her! seek her!

*Test.* Sir, all her clothes are in her chamber.

*Ser.* Sir, Mrs. Clarinda said she was in boy's clothes.

*Strid.* Ay, ay, I know it—Bellamy has her—Come along—Pursue her. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter RANGER.*

*Ran.* Hark!——Was not the noise this way——No, there is no game stirring. This same goddess, Diana, shines so bright with her chastity, that egad, I believe the wenches are ashamed to look her in the face. Now I am in an admirable mood for a frolic: have wine in my head, and money in my pocket, and so am furnished out for the cannonading of any countess in Christendom. Ha! what have we here! a ladder!—this cannot be placed here for nothing—and a window open! Is it love or mischief now that is going on within? I care not which—I am in a right cue for either. Up I go, *neck or nothing*. Stay—do I not run a greater chance of spoiling sport than I do of making any? that I hate as much as I love the other. There can be no harm in seeing how the land lies—I'll up. [*Goes up softly.*] All is hush——Ha! a light, and a woman! by all that's lucky, neither old nor crooked! I'll in——Ha! she is gone again! I will after her. [*Gets in at the window.*] And for fear of the squalls of virtue, and the pursuit of the family, I will make sure of the ladder. Now, Fortune, be my guide!

SCENE II.

*Mrs. STRICTLAND's Dressing-Room. Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND followed by LUCETTA.*

*Mrs. Str.* Well, I am in great hopes she will escape.

*Luc.* Never fear, madam, the lovers have the start of him, and I warrant they keep it.

*Mrs. Str.* Were Mr. Strickland ever to suspect my being privy to her flight, I know not what might be the consequence.

*Luc.* Then you had better be undressing. He may return immediately.

*[As she is sitting down at the toilet Ranger enters behind.]*

*Ran.* Young and beautiful. *[Aside.]*

*Luc.* I have watch'd him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected till this morning——

*Mrs. Str.* And who gave you authority to watch his actions, or pry into his secrets?

*Luc.* I hope, madam, you are not angry. I thought it might have been of service to you to know my master was jealous.

*Ran.* And her husband jealous! If she does but send away the maid, I am happy.

*Mrs. Str.* *[Angrily.]* Leave me.

*Luc.* This it is to meddle with other people's affairs. *[Exit in anger.]*

*Ran.* What a lucky dog I am! I never made a gentleman a cuckold before. Now, impudence, assist me.

*Mrs. Str.* [*Rising.*] Provoking! I am sure I never have deserved it of him.

*Ran.* Oh, cuckold him by all means, madam, I am your man! [*She shrieks.*] Oh, fie, madam! if you squall so cursedly you will be discover'd.

*Mrs. Str.* Discover'd! What mean you, sir! do you come to abuse me?

*Ran.* I'll do my endeavour, madam; you can have no more.

*Mrs. Str.* Whence came you? How got you here?

*Ran.* Dear madam, so long as I'm here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came? but that I may satisfy your curiosity, first, as to your whence came you? I answer out of the street: and to your how got you here? I say, in at the window; it stood so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, madam—you were going to undress. I beg I may not incommode you.

*Mrs. Str.* This is the most consummate piece of impudence!——

*Ran.* For Heaven's sake have one drop of pity for a poor young fellow who long has loved you.

*Mrs. Str.* What would the fellow have?

*Ran.* Your husband's usage will excuse you to the world.

*Mrs. Str.* I cannot bear this insolence! Help! help!

*Ran.* Oh, hold that clamorous tongue, madam! Speak one word more, and I am gone, positively gone.

*Mrs. Str.* Gone! so I would have you.



*Ran.* Lord, madam, you are so hasty!

*Mrs. Str.* Shall I not speak when a thief, robber, breaks into my house at midnight? Help! help!

*Ran.* Ha! no one hears. Now, Cupid, assist me—Look ye, madam, I never could make fine speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lie; I have said more to you already, than ever I said to a woman in such circumstances in all my life. But since I find you will yield to no persuasion to your good; I will gently force you to be grateful. [*Throws down his hat, and seizes her.*] Come, come, unbend that brow, and look more kindly on me!

*Mrs. Str.* For shame, sir! thus on my knees let me beg for mercy. [*Kneeling.*]

*Ran.* And thus on mine, let me beg the same.

[*He kneels, catches, and kisses her.*]

*Strid.* [*Within.*] Take away her sword! she'll hurt herself!

*Mrs. Str.* Oh, Heavens! that's my husband's voice!

*Ran.* [*Rising.*] The devil it is!

*Strid.* [*Within.*] Take away her sword, I say, and then I can close with her.

*Mrs. Str.* He is upon the stairs, now coming up! I am undone if he sees you.

*Ran.* Pox on him, I must decamp then. Which way?

*Mrs. Str.* Through this passage into the next chamber.

*Ran.* And so into the street. With all my heart. You may be perfectly easy, madam: mum's the

word; I never blab. [*Aside.*] I shall not leave off so, but wait till the last moment. [*Exit Ranger.*]

*Mrs. Str.* So, he's gone. What could I have said, if he had been discovered!

*Enter Mr. STRICTLAND driving in JACINTHA, LUCETTA following.*

*Strid.* Once more, my pretty masculine madam, you are welcome home; and I hope to keep you somewhat closer than I have done; for to-morrow morning eight o'clock is the latest hour you shall stay in this lewd town.

*Jac.* Oh, fir; when once a girl is equipp'd with a hearty resolution, it is not your worship's sagacity, nor the great chain at your gate, can hinder her from doing what she has a mind.

*Strid.* Oh, Lord! Lord! how this love improves a young lady's modesty!

*Jac.* Am I to blame to seek for happiness any where, when you are resolved to make me miserable here?

*Strid.* I have this night prevented your making yourself so; and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you safe now, and the devil shall not get you out of my clutches again. I have lock'd the doors and barred them, I warrant you. So here, [*Giving her a candle.*] troop to your chamber, and to bed, whilst you are well. Go! [*He treads on Ranger's hat.*] What's here? a hat! a man's hat in my wife's dressing-room! [*Looking at the hat.*]

*Mrs. Str.* What shall I do?

*Strid.* [*Taking up the hat and looking at Mrs. Strickland*] Ha! by hell, I see 'tis true!

*Mrs. Str.* My fears confound me. I dare not tell the truth, and know not how to frame a lie! [*Aside.*

*Strid.* Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Strickland, how came this hat into your chamber?

*Luc.* Are you that way disposed, my fine lady, and will not trust me? [*Aside.*

*Strid.* Speak, wretch, speak——

*Jac.* I could not have suspected this. [*Aside.*

*Strid.* Why dost thou not speak?

*Mrs. Str.* Sir——

*Strid.* Guilt—'tis guilt that ties your tongue!

*Luc.* I must bring her off, however. "No chambermaid can help it." [*Aside.*

*Strid.* My fears are just, and I am miserable——  
Thou worst of women!

*Mrs. Str.* I know my innocence, and can bear this no longer.

*Strid.* I know you are false, and 'tis I who will bear my injuries no longer.

[*Both walk about in a passion.*

*Luc.* [*To Jacintha aside.*] Is not the hat yours? own it, madam. [*Takes away Jacintha's hat, and exit.*

*Mrs. Str.* What grounds, what cause have you for jealousy, when you yourself can witness, your leaving me was accidental, your return uncertain; and expected even sooner than it happen'd? The abuse is gross and palpable.

*Strid.* Why this is true!

*Mrs. Str.* Indeed, Jacintha, I am innocent.

*Striā.* And yet this hat must belong to somebody.

*Jac.* Dear Mrs. Striāland, be not concerned. When he has diverted himself a little longer with it——

*Striā.* Ha !

*Jac.* I suppose he will give me my hat again.

*Striā.* Your hat !

*Jac.* Yes, my hat. You brush'd it from my side yourself, and then trod upon it ; whether on purpose to abuse this lady or no, you best know yourself.

*Striā.* It cannot be—'tis all a lie.

*Jac.* Believe so still, with all my heart ; but the hat is mine. *Now, sir, who does it belong to ?*

*[Snatches and puts it on.]*

*Striā.* Why did she look so ?

*Jac.* Your violence of temper is too much for her. You use her ill, and then suspect her for that confusion which you yourself occasion.

*Striā.* Why did not you set me right at first ?

*Jac.* Your hard usage of me, sir, is a sufficient reason why I should not be much concerned to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your lady's sake I do it now ; who deserves much better of you than to be thus exposed for every slight suspicion. See where she sits—Go to her.

*Mrs. Str. [Rising.]* Indeed, Mr. Striāland, I have a soul as much above——

*Striā.* Whew ! Now you have both found your tongues, and I must bear with their eternal rattle.

*Jac.* For shame, sir, go to her, and——

*Strið.* Well, well, what shall I say? I forgive—all is over. I, I, I forgive.

*Mrs. Str.* Forgive! What do you mean?

*Jac.* Forgive her! is that all? Consider, sir—

*Strið.* Hold, hold your confounded tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask pardon—or forgive—or any thing. Good now, be quiet—I ask your pardon—there—[*Kisses her.*] For you, madam, I am infinitely obliged to you, and I could find in my heart to make you a return in kind, by marrying you to a beggar, but I have more conscience. Come, come, to your chamber. Here, take this candle.

*Enter LUCETTA pertly.*

*Luc.* Sir, if you please, I will light my young lady to bed.

*Strið.* No, no! no such thing, good madam. She shall have nothing but her pillow to consult this night, I assure you. So, in, in. [*The ladies take leave. Exit Jac.*] Good night, kind madam.

*Luc.* Pox of the jealous fool! we might both have escap'd out of the window purely. [*Aside.*]

*Strið.* Go, get you down; and, do you hear, order the coach to be ready in the morning at eight, exactly. [*Exit Lucetta.*] So, she is safe till tomorrow, and then for the country; and when she is there I can manage as I think fit.

*Mrs. Str.* Dear Mr. Striðland—

*Strið.* I am not in a humour, Mrs. Striðland, fit to talk with you. Go to bed. I will endeavour to get the better of my temper, if I can; I'll fol-



low you. [*Exit Mrs. Str.*] How despicable have I made myself. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

*Another Chamber. Enter RANGER.*

*Ran.* All seems hush'd again, and I may venture out. I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole skin. And shall so much love and claret as I am in possession of only lull me to sleep, when it might so much better keep me waking? Forbid it fortune, and forbid it love. This is a chamber, perhaps of some bewitching female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a light! the door opens. A boy! pox on him. [*He retires.*]

*Enter JACINTHA with a candle.*

*Jac.* I have been listening at the door, and from their silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to bed together.

*Ran.* A pretty boy, faith; he seems uneasy.

[*Aside.*]

*Jac.* [*Sitting down.*] What an unlucky night has this proved to me! Every circumstance has fallen out unhappily.

*Ran.* He talks aloud. I'll listen.

[*Aside.*]

*Jac.* But what most amazes me is, that Clarinda should betray me!

*Ran.* Clarinda! she must be a woman. Well, what of her?

*Jac.* My guardian else would never have suspected my disguise.

*Ran.* Disguise! Ha, it must be so! What eyes she has! what a dull rogue was I not to suspect this sooner! [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* Ha, I had forgot; the ladder is at the window still, and I will boldly venture by myself. [*Rising briskly sees Ranger.*] Ha! a man, and well dressed! Ha, Mrs. Strictland! are you then at last dishonest!

*Ran.* By all my wishes she is a charming woman! lucky rascal! [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* But I will, if possible, conceal her shame, and stand the brunt of his impertinence.

*Ran.* What shall I say to her? No matter; any thing soft will do the business. [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* Who are you?

*Ran.* A man, young gentleman.

*Jac.* And what would you have?

*Ran.* A woman.

*Jac.* You are very free, sir. Here are none for you.

*Ran.* Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the most charming creature nature ever set her hand to; and you are the dear little pilot that must direct me to her heart.

*Jac.* What mean you, sir? It is an office I am not accustomed to.

*Ran.* You won't have far to go, however. I never make my errands tedious. It is to your own heart, dear madam, I would have you whisper in my behalf. Nay, never start. Think you such

beauty could ever be concealed from eyes so well acquainted with its charms?

*Jac.* What will become of me! If I cry out, Mrs. Strictland is undone. This is my last resort.

*[Aside.]*

*Ran.* Pardon, dear lady, the boldness of this visit, which your guardian's care has forced me to: but I long have loved you, long have doated on that beauteous face, and followed you from place to place, though perhaps unknown and unregarded.

*Jac.* Here's a special fellow! *[Aside.]*

*Ran.* Turn then an eye of pity on my sufferings; and, by Heaven, one tender look from those piercing eyes, one touch of this soft hand——

*[Going to take her hand.]*

*Jac.* Hold, fir, no nearer.

*Ran.* Would more than repay whole years of pain.

*Jac.* Hear me; but keep your distance, or I raise the family.

*Ran.* Blessings on her tongue only for prattling to me!

*Jac.* Oh, for a moment's courage, and I shall shame him from his purpose. *[Aside.]* If I were certain so much gallantry had been shewn on my account only——

*Ran.* You wrong your beauty to think that any other could have power to draw me hither. By all the little loves that play about your lips, I swear——

*Jac.* You came to me, and me alone.

*Ran.* By all the thousand graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

*Jac.* Well said—*Could I but believe you—*

*Ran.* By Heaven she comes! Ah, honest Ranger, I never knew thee fail. [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* Pray, sir, where did you leave this hat?

*Ran.* That hat! that hat—'tis my hat—I dropt it in the next chamber as I was looking for yours.

*Jac.* How mean and despicable do you look now!

*Ran.* So, so! I am in a pretty pickle! [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has passed within; and how ill it agrees with what you have professed to me. Let me advise you, sir, to begone immediately: through that window you may easily get into the street. One scream of mine, the least noise at that door, will wake the house.

*Ran.* Say you so? [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* Believe me, sir, an injur'd husband is not so easily appeas'd, and a suspected wife that is jealous of her honour—

*Ran.* Is the devil, and so let's have no more of her. Look ye, madam, [*Getting between the door and her.*] I have but one argument left, and that is a strong one. Look on me well; I am as handsome, a strong, well made fellow as any about town; and, since we are alone, as I take it, we can have no occasion to be more private.

[*Going to lay hold of her.*]

*Jac.* I have a reputation, sir, and will maintain it.

*Ran.* You have a bewitching pair of eyes.

*Jac.* Consider my virtue. [*Struggling.*]

*Ran.* Consider your beauty and my desires.

*Jac.* If I were a man, you dar'd not use me thus.

*Ran.* I should not have the same temptation.

*Jac.* Hear me, fir, I will be heard. [*Breaks from him.*] There is a man who will make you repent this usage of me. Oh, Bellamy! where art thou now?

*Ran.* Bellamy?

*Jac.* Were he here, you durst not thus affront me. [*Bursting into tears.*]

*Ran.* His mistress, on my soul! [*Aside.*] You can love, madam; you can love, I find. Her tears affect me strangely. [*Aside.*]

*Jac.* I am not ashamed to own my passion for a man of virtue and honour. I love and glory in it.

*Ran.* Oh, brave! and you can write letters, you can. "I will not trust myself home with you this evening, because I know it is inconvenient."

*Jac.* Ha!

*Ran.* "Therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; 'tis no matter how far off my guardian's. Yours, Jacintha."

*Jac.* The very words of my letter! I am amaz'd! Do you know Mr. Bellamy?

*Ran.* There is not a man on earth I have so great a value for: and he must have some value for me too, or he would never have shewn me your pretty epistle; think of that, fair lady: The ladder is at the window, and so, madam, I hope delivering you safe into his arms, will, in some measure, expiate the crime I have been guilty of to you

*Jac.* Good Heaven! How fortunate is this!

*Ran.* I believe I make myself appear more wick-



ed than I really am. For, damn me, if I do not feel more satisfaction in the thoughts of restoring you to my friend, than I could have pleasure in any favour your bounty could have bestowed. *Let any other rake lay his hand upon his heart and say the same.*

*Jac.* Your generosity transports me.

*Ran.* Let us lose no time then; the ladder's ready. Where was you to lodge?

*Jac.* At Mr. Meggot's.

*Ran.* At my friend Jacky's! better and better still.

*Jac.* Are you acquainted with him too?

*Ran.* Ay, ay; why, did I not tell you at first that I was one of your old acquaintance? I know all about you, you see; though the devil fetch me if ever I saw you before. Now, madam, give me your hand.

*Jac.* And now, sir, have with you.

*Ran.* Then thou art a girl of spirit. And though I long to hug you for trusting yourself with me, I will not beg a single kiss, till Bellamy himself shall give me leave. He must fight well that takes you from me. [*Exeunt.*]

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ACT IV. SCENE I.

*The Piazza. Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY.*

*Bellamy.*

PSHA! What impertinent devil put it into your head to meddle with my affairs.

*Fran.* You know I went thither in pursuit of another.

*Bel.* I know nothing you had to do there at all.

*Fran.* I thought, Mr. Bellamy, you were a lover.

*Bel.* I am so; and therefore should be forgiven this sudden warmth.

*Fran.* And therefore should forgive the fond impertinence of a lover.

*Bel.* Jealousy, you know, is as natural an incident to love—

*Fran.* As curiosity. By one piece of filly curiosity I have gone nigh to ruin both myself and you; let not then your jealousy complete our misfortunes. I fear I have lost a mistress as well as you. Then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

*Bel.* It is impossible. She is gone, removed forever from my sight: she is in the country by this time.

*Fran.* How did you lose her after we parted?

*Bel.* By too great confidence. When I got her to my chair, the chairmen were not to be found. And, safe as I thought in our disguise, I actually put her into the chair, when Mr. Strickland and his servants were in sight; which I had no sooner done, than they surrounded us, overpowered me, and carried her away.

*Fran.* Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second attempt?

*Bel.* I had designed it; but when I came to the door, I found the ladder removed; and hearing no noise, seeing no lights, nor being able to make any

body answer, I concluded all attempts as impracticable as I now find them.—Ha! I see Lucetta coming. Then they may be still in town.

*Enter LUCETTA.*

Lucetta, welcome! what news of Jacintha?

*Luc.* News, sir! you fright me out of my senses! Why, is she not with you?

*Bel.* What do you mean? With me! I have not seen her since I lost her last night.

*Luc.* Good Heav'n! then she is undone for ever.

*Fran.* Why, what's the matter?

*Bel.* Speak out—I'm all amazement.

*Luc.* She is escap'd, without any of us knowing how. Nobody miss'd her till morning. We all thought she went away with you. But Heaven knows now what may have happened.

*Bel.* Somebody must have accompanied her in her flight.

*Luc.* We know of nobody: we are all in confusion at home. My master swears revenge on you. My mistress says a stranger has her.

*Bel.* A stranger!

*Luc.* But Mrs. Clarinda——

*Bel.* Clarinda! who is she?

*Luc.* [*To Frankly.*] The lady, sir, who you saw at our house last night.

*Fran.* Ha! what of her?

*Luc.* She says, she is sure one Frankly is the man; she saw them together, and knows it to be true.

*Fran.* Damn'd fortune.

[*Aside.*

*Luc.* Sure this is not Mr. Frankly.

*Fran.* Nothing will convince him now. [*Aside.*

*Bel.* [*Looking at Frankly.*] Ha! 'tis true!—I see it is true. [*Aside.*] Lucetta run up to Buckle, and take him with you to search wherever you can. [*Puts her out.*] Now, Mr. Frankly, I have found you.—You have used me so ill, that you force me to forget you are my friend.

*Fran.* What do you mean?

*Bel.* Draw.

*Fran.* Are you mad? By Heavens, I am innocent.

*Bel.* I have heard you, and will no longer be imposed on—Defend yourself.

*Fran.* Nay, if you are so hot. I draw to defend myself, as I would against a madman.

*Enter RANGER.*

*Ran.* What the devil, fwords at noon-day! Have among you, faith! [*Parts them.*] What's here, Bellamy—Yes, egad, you are Bellamy, and you are Frankly, put up, both of you—or else—I am a devilish fellow when once my sword is out.

*Bel.* We shall have a time——

*Ran.* [*Pushing Bellamy one way.*] A time for what?

*Fran.* I shall be always as ready to defend my innocence as now.

*Ran.* [*Pushing Frankly the other way.*] Innocence! ay, to be sure—at your age—a mighty innocent fellow, no doubt. But what, in the name of common sense, is it that ails you both? are you mad? The last time I saw you, you were hugging and kissing;

and now you are cutting one another's throats—I never knew any good come of one fellow beflavering another—But I shall put you into better humour, I warrant you——Bellamy, Frankly, listen both of you—Such fortune—such a scheme.

*Bel.* Pr'ythee, leave fooling. What, art drunk?

*Fran.* He is always so, I think.

*Ran.* And who gave you the privilege of thinking? Drunk! no; I am not drunk.—Tipfy, perhaps, with my good fortune—merry, and in spirits—though I have not fire enough to run my friend through the body. Not drunk, though Jack Meggot and I have boxed it about—Champaign was the word for two whole hours by Shrewsbury clock.

*Bel.* Jack Meggot!—Why, I left him at one, going to bed.

*Ran.* That may be, but I made shift to rouse him and his family by four this morning. Ounds, I pick'd up a wench, and carried her to his house.

*Bel.* Ha!

*Ran.* Such a variety of adventures—Nay, you shall hear—But, before I begin, Bellamy, you shall promise me half a dozen kisses before hand; for the devil fetch me if that little jade, Jacintha, would give me one, though I pressed hard.

*Bel.* Who, Jacintha? pres to kiss Jacintha?

*Ran.* Kiss her! ay; why not? is she not a woman, and made to be kissed?

*Bel.* Kiss her—I shall run distracted?

*Ran.* How could I help it, when I had her alone, you rogue, in her bed-chamber at midnight! if I had been to be sacrificed, I should have done it.



*Bel.* Bed-chamber, at midnight ! I can hold no longer—Draw.

*Fran.* Be easy, Bellamy. [Interposing.]

*Bel.* He has been at some of his damn'd tricks with her.

*Fran.* Hear him out.

*Ran.* 'Sdeath, how could I know she was his mistress ? But I tell this story most miserably. I should have told you first, I was in another lady's chamber. By the lord, I got in at the window by a ladder of ropes.

*Fran.* Ha ! Another lady ?

*Ran.* Another : and stole in upon her whilst she was undressing ; beautiful as an angel, blooming and young—

*Fran.* What, in the same house ?

*Bel.* What is this to Jacintha ? Ease me of my pain.

*Ran.* Ay, ay, in the same house, on the same floor. The sweetest, little angel—But I design to have another touch with her.

*Fran.* 'Sdeath ! but you shall have a touch upon me first.

*Bel.* Stay, Frankly. [Interposing.]

*Ran.* Why, what strange madness has possess'd you both, that nobody must kiss a pretty wench but yourselves.

*Bel.* What became of Jacintha ?

*Ran.* Ounds ! what have you done, that you must monopolize kissing ?

*Fran.* Pr'ythee, honest Ranger, ease me of the pain I am in. Was her name Clarinda ?

*Bel.* Speak in plain words, where Jacintha is, where to be found. Dear boy, tell me.

*Ran.* Ay, now it is honest Ranger; and, dear boy, tell me—and a minute ago, my throat was to be cut—I could find in my heart not to open my lips. But here comes Jack Meggot, who will let you into all the secret, though he design'd to keep it from you, in half the time that I can, though I had ever so great a mind to tell it you.

*Enter JACK MEGGOT.*

*J. Meg.* So, save ye, save ye, lads! we have been frighten'd out of our wits for you. Not hearing of Mr. Bellamy, poor Jacintha is ready to sink for fear of any accident.

*Bel.* Is she at your house?

*J. Meg.* Why, did not you know that? We dispatched Master Ranger to you three hours ago.

*Ran.* Ay, plague! but I had business of my own, so I could not come—Hark ye, Frankly, is your girl, maid, wife, or widow?

*Fran.* A maid, I hope.

*Ran.* The odds are against you, Charles—But mine is married, you rogue, and her husband jealous—The devil is in it if I do not reap some reward for my last night's service.

*Bel.* He has certainly been at Mrs. Strickland herself. But, Frankly, I dare not look on you.

*Fran.* This one embrace cancels all thoughts of enmity.

*Bel.* Thou generous man!—But I must haste to ease Jacintha of her fears. [Exit.

*Fran.* And I to make up matters with Clarinda.

[*Exit.*]

*Ran.* And I to some kind wench or other, Jack.  
But where shall I find her, Heaven knows. And  
so, my servise to your monkey.

*J. Meg.* Adieu, rattlepate.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*The Hall of Mr. STRICTLAND's House. Enter Mrs.  
STRICTLAND and CLARINDA.*

*Mrs. Str.* But, why in such a hurry, my dear;  
stay till your servants can go along with you.

*Cla.* Oh, no matter; they'll follow with my  
things. It is but a little way off, and my chair will  
guard me. After my staying out so late last night,  
I am sure Mr. Strictland will think every minute  
an age whilst I am in his house.

*Mrs. Str.* I am as much amazed at his suspecting  
your innocence as my own; and every time I think  
of it, I blush at my present behaviour to you.

*Cla.* No ceremony, dear child.

*Mrs. Str.* No, Clarinda, I am too well acquaint-  
ed with your good humour. But I fear, in the eye  
of a malicious world, it may look like a confirma-  
tion of his suspicion.

*Cla.* My dear, if the world will speak ill of me  
for the little innocent gaiety, which I think the pe-  
culiar happiness of my temper, I know no way to  
prevent it, and am only sorry the world is so ill-na-  
tured: but I shall not part with my mirth, I assure

them, so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my dear, this may be the greatest uneasiness your husband's jealousy ever gives you.

*Mrs. Str.* I hope he never again may have such occasion as he had last night.

*Cla.* You are so unfashionable a wife.—Why, last night's accident would have made half the wives in London easy for life. Has not his jealousy discover'd itself openly? And are not you innocent? There is nothing but your foolish temper that prevents his being absolutely in your power.

*Mrs. Str.* Clarinda, this is too serious an affair to laugh at. Let me advise you, take care of Mr. Frankly, observe his temper well, and if he has the least taint of jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your power.

*Cla.* You will hear little more of Frankly, I believe. Here is Mr. Strictland.

*Enter Mr. STRICTLAND and LUCETTA.*

*Strið.* Lucetta says you want me, madam.

*Cla.* I trouble you, sir, only that I might return you thanks for the civilities I have receiv'd in your family, before I took my leave.

*Strið.* Keep them to yourself, dear madam. As it is at my request that you leave my house, your thanks upon that occasion are not very desirable.

*Cla.* Oh, sir, you need not fear. My thanks were only for your civilities. They will not overburden you. But I'll conform to your humour sir, and part with as little ceremony——

*Strið.* As we met.

*Cl.* The brute! [*Afide.*] My dear, good b'ye, we may meet again. [*To Mrs. Strickland.*

*Stri.* If you dare trust me with your hand.

*Cl.* Lucetta, remember my instructions. Now, fir, have with you. [*Mr. Strickland leads Clarinda out.*

*Mrs. Str.* Are her instructions cruel or kind, Lucetta? For I suppose they relate to Mr. Frankly.

*Luc.* Have you a mind to try if I can keep a secret as well as yourself, madam? But I will shew you I am fit to be trusted by keeping this, though it signifies nothing.

*Mrs. Str.* This answer is not so civil, I think.

*Luc.* I beg pardon, madam, I meant it not to offend.

*Mrs. Str.* Pray let us have no more such. I neither desire, nor want your assistance.

*Re-enter Mr. STRICKLAND.*

*Stri.* She is gone; I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have begun the day with gallantry, madam, shall I conduct you up?

*Mrs. Str.* There is something, fir, which gives you secret uneasiness. I wish——

*Stri.* Perhaps so, madam; and perhaps it may soon be no secret at all. [*Leads her out.*

*Luc.* Would I were once well settled with my young lady; for, at present, this is but an odd sort of a queer family. Last night's affair puzzles me. A hat there was that belong'd to none of us, that's certain; madam was in a fright, that is as certain; and I brought all off. Jacintha escap'd, no one of



us knows how. The good man's jealousy was yesterday groundless; yet to-day, in my mind, he is very much in the right. Mighty odd all this!—Somebody knocks. If this should be Clarinda's spark, I have an odd message for him too.

*[She opens the door.]*

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* So, my pretty handmaid, meeting with you gives me some hopes. May I speak with Clarinda?

*Luc.* Whom do you want, sir?

*Fran.* Clarinda, child. The young lady I was admitted to yesterday.

*Luc.* Clarinda!—No such person lives here, I assure you.

*Fran.* Where then?

*Luc.* I don't know indeed, sir.

*Fran.* Will you inquire within?

*Luc.* Nobody knows in this house, sir, you will find.

*Fran.* What do you mean? She is a friend of Jacintha's, your lady. I will take my oath she was here last night; and you yourself spoke of her being here this morning—Not know!

*Luc.* No; none of us know. She went away of a sudden—no one of us can imagine whither.

*Fran.* Why, faith, child, thou hast a tolerable face, and hast deliver'd this denial very handsomely: but let me tell you, your impertinence this morning had lik'd to have cost me my life; now, therefore, make me amends. I come from your young mis-

treas; I come from Mr. Bellamy; I come with my purse full of gold, that persuasive rhetoric, to win you to let me see and speak to this Clarinda once again.

*Luc.* She is not here, sir.

*Fran.* Direct me to her.

*Luc.* No, I can't do that neither.

*Enter Mr. STRICTLAND behind.*

*Striā.* I heard a knocking at the door, and a man's voice—Ha! *[Aside.*

*Fran.* Deliver this letter to her.

*Striā.* By all my fears, a letter! *[Aside.*

*Luc.* I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

*Fran.* Take it then—and with it this.

*[Kisses her, and gives her money.*

*Striā.* Um! there are two bribes in a breath! What a jade she is! *[Aside.*

*Luc.* Ay; this gentleman understands reason.

*Fran.* And be assured you oblige your mistress while you are serving me.

*Striā.* Her mistress!—Damn'd sex! and damn'd wife, thou art an epitome of that sex! *[Aside.*

*Fran.* And if you can procure me an answer, your fee shall be enlarg'd. *[Exit.*

*Luc.* The next step is to get her to read this letter.

*Striā.* *[Snatches the letter.]* No noise—but stand silent there, whilst I read this. *[Breaks it open and drops the case.]* “Madam, the gaiety of a heart happy as mine was yesterday, may, I hope, easily ex-

cuse the unseasonable visit I made your house last night."—Death and the devil! confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much!—There was a man then to whom the hat belong'd: and I was gulled, abused, cheated, impos'd on by a chit, a child—Oh, woman, woman!—But I will be calm, search it to the bottom, and have a full revenge—

*Luc.* [*Aside.*] So, here's fine work! He'll make himself very ridiculous though.

*Strið.* [*Reads on.*] "I know my innocence will appear so manifestly, that I need only appeal to the lady who accompanied you at Bath." Your very humble servant, good, innocent, fine Madam Clarinda. "And I do not doubt but her good nature," bawd! bawd! "will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble servant,

CHARLES FRANKLY."

Now, who can say my jealousy lack'd foundation, or my suspicion of fine madam's innocent gaiety was unjust?—Gaiety! why ay, 'twas gaiety brought him hither. Gaiety makes her a bawd—My wife may be a whore in gaiety. What a number of things become fashionable under the notion of gaiety—What, you receiv'd this epistle in gaiety too; and were to deliver it to my wife, I suppose, when the gay fit came next upon her?—Why, you impudent young strumpet, do you laugh at me?

*Luc.* I wou'd, if I dar'd, laugh heartily.—  
Be pleas'd, sir, only to look at that piece of paper that lies there.

*Strið.* Ha!

*Luc.* I have not touched it, fir. It is the case that letter came in, and the direction will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

*Strid.* This is directed to Clarinda!

*Luc.* Oh, is it so? Now read it over again, and all your foolish doubts will vanish.

*Strid.* I have no doubts at all. I am satisfied that you, Jacintha, Clarinda, my wife, all are——

*Luc.* Lud! Lud! you will make a body mad.

*Strid.* Hold your impertinent tongue.

*Luc.* You'll find the thing to be just as I say, fir.

*Strid.* Begone. [*Exit Lucetta.*] They must be poor at the work, indeed, if they did not lend one another their names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident, and I am miserable. But for my wife, she shall not stay one night longer in my house. Separation, shame, contempt, shall be her portion. I am determined in the thing; and when once it is over, I may, perhaps, be easy. [*Exit.*]

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### SCENE III.

*The Street.* CLARINDA brought in a Chair, RANGER following.

*Ran.* Harkye, chairman! damn your confounded trot. Go slower.

*Cla.* Here, stop.

*Ran.* By Heavens! the monsters hear reason and obey.

*Cla.* [*Letting down the window.*] What troublesome fellow was that?

1. *Chair*. Some rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himself home, and wants us to do it for him.

*Cl*a. There—And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. [Goes in.

*Ran*. That's as much as to say now, pray follow me. Madam, you are a charming woman, and I will do it—

1 *Chair*. Stand off, sir.

*Ran*. Pr'ythee, honest fellow—what—what writing is that? [Endeavouring to get in.

2 *Chair*. You come not here.

*Ran*. Lodgings to be let: a pretty convenient inscription, and the sign of a good modest family. There may be lodgings for gentlemen as well as ladies. Harkye, rogues; I'll lay you all the silver I have in my pocket, there it is, I get in there in spite of your teeth, ye pimps.

[Throws down the money and goes in.

[Within.] *Chair, chair, chair!*

*Chair*. Who calls chair?

"1 *Chair*. What, have you let the gentleman in?

"2 *Chair*. I'll tell you what, partner, he certainly slipt by whilst we were picking up the money.  
"Come, take up." [Exeunt.

#### SCENE IV.

*CLARINDA's Lodgings. Enter CLARINDA, and Maid following.*

*Maid*. Bless me, madam, you seem disorder'd; what's the matter?



*Cla.* Some impertinent fellow follow'd the chair, and I am afraid they let him in. [A noise between Ranger and Landlady.] I should certainly know that voice. [Ranger talks with the Landlady.] My madcap cousin Ranger, as I live. I am sure he does not know me.—If I cou'd but hide my face now, what sport I shou'd have! A mask, a mask! Run and see if you can find a mask.

*Maid.* I believe there is one above.

*Cla.* Run, run, and fetch it. [*Exit Maid.*] Here he comes.

*Enter RANGER and Landlady.*

How unlucky this is! [*Turning from them.*

*Land.* What's your business here, unmannerly fir?

*Ran.* Well, let's see these lodgings that are to be let. Gad, a very pretty neat tenement—But hark-ye, is it real and natural, all that, or only patched up and new painted this summer-season against the town fills?

*Land.* What does the saucy fellow mean with his double tenders here? Get you down—

*Enter Maid with a mask.*

*Maid.* Here is a very dirty one. [*Aside to Clara.*]

*Cla.* No matter—now we shall see a little what he would be at. [*Aside.*]

*Land.* This is an honest house. For all your lac'd waistcoat, I'll have you thrown down neck and heels.

*Ran.* Pho! not in such a hurry, good old lady—A mask! nay, with all my heart. It saves a world of blushing. Have you ne'er a one for me!—I am apt to be ashamed myself on these occasions.

*Land.* Get you down, I say——

*Ran.* Not if I guess right, old lady. Madam, [*To Clarinda, who makes signs to the Landlady to retire.*] look ye there now! that a woman should live to your age, and know so little of the matter. Begone. [*Exit Landlady.*] By her forwardness this should be a whore of quality. My boy, Ranger, thou art in luck to-day. She won't speak, I find—then I will. [*Aside.*] Delicate lodgings truly, Madam; and very neatly furnish'd—A very convenient room this, I must needs own, to entertain a mix'd company. But, my dear charming creature, does not that door open to a more commodious apartment for the happiness of a private friend, or so? The prettiest brass lock—Fast, um; that won't do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful woman; I am sure you are. Pr'ythee let me see your face. It is your interest, child—The longer you delay, the more I shall expect. Therefore, [*Taking her hand.*] my dear, soft, kind, new acquaintance, thus let me take your hand, and whilst you gently with the other let day-light in upon me, let me softly hold you to me, that with my longing lips I may receive the warmest, best impression. [*She unmasks.*] Clarinda!

*Cla.* Ha, ha! your servant, cousin Ranger—  
Ha, ha, ha!

*Ran.* Oh, your humble servant, madam. You had like to have been beholden to your mask, cousin—I must brazen it out. [*Aside.*]

*Cla.* Ha, ha, ha! You were not so happy in your disguise, sir. The pretty stagger in your gait, that happy disposition of your wig, the genteel negligence of your whole person, and those pretty flowers of modish gallantry, made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet coz. Ha, ha!

*Ran.* Oh, I knew you too, but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my person, and had a mind to sink the relation under that little piece of black velvet! and, egad, you never find me behind hand in a frolic. But since it is otherwise, my merry, good-humoured cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in town, as I should be to meet any of my old bottle acquaintance.

*Cla.* And on my side, I am as happy in meeting your worship, as I should be in a rencounter with e'er a petticoat in Christendom.

*Ran.* And if you have any occasion for a dangling gallant to Vauxhall, Ranelagh, or even the poor neglected Park; you are so unlike the rest of your virtuous sisters of the petticoat; that I will venture myself with you.

*Cla.* Take care what you promise; for who knows but this face, you were pleased to say so many pretty things of before you saw it, may raise so many rivals among your kept mistresses, and reps of quality—

*Ran.* Hold, hold! a truce with your satire, sweet coz; or if scandal must be the topic of every

virtuous woman's conversation, call for your tea-water, and let it be in its proper element. Come, your tea, your tea.

*Enter Maid.*

*Cla.* With all my heart——Who's there? Get tea—upon condition that you stay till it comes.

*Ran.* That is according as you behave, madam.

*Cla.* Oh, fir, I am very sensible of the favour.

*Ran.* Nay, you may, I assure you; for there is but one woman of virtue, besides yourself, I would stay with ten minutes (and I have not known her above these twelve hours; the insipidity, or the rancour of their discourse is insufferable—'Sdeath! I had rather take the air with my grandmother.

*Cla.* Ha, ha, ha! the ladies are highly obliged to you, I vow.

*Ran.* I tell you what; the lady I speak of was obliged to me, and the generous girl is ready to own it.

*Cla.* And, pray, when was it you did virtue this considerable service?

*Ran.* But this last night, the devil fetch me! A romantic whim of mine conveyed me into her chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone at midnight, dress'd like a soft Adonis; her lovely hair all loose about her shoulders——

*Cla.* In boy's clothes! this is worth attending to.

*[Aside.*

*Ran.* Gad, I no more suspected her being a woman, than I did your being my cater-cousin.

*Cla.* How did you discover it at last?

*Ran.* Why, faith, she very modestly dropt me a hint of it herself.

*Cla.* Herself! If this should be Jacintha! [*Aside.*]

*Ran.* Ay, 'forgad, did she; which I imagined a good sign at midnight, ay, cousin! So I e'en invented a long story of a passion I had for her, though I had never seen her before—you know my old way!—and said so many such tender things——

*Cla.* As you said to me just now.

*Ran.* Pho! quite in another style, I assure you. It was midnight, and I was in a right cue.

*Cla.* Well! And what did she answer to all these protestations?

*Ran.* Why, instead of running into my arms at once, as I expected——

*Cla.* To be sure.

*Ran.* 'Gad, like a free-hearted, honest girl, she frankly told me she liked another better than she liked me; that I had something in my face that shewed I was a gentleman; and she would e'en trust herself with me, if I would give her my word I would convey her to her spark.

*Cla.* Oh, brave! and how did you bear this?

*Ran.* Why, curse me, if I am ever angry with a woman for not having a passion for me.

*Cla.* No!

*Ran.* Never. I only hate your sex's vain pretence of having no passion at all. Gad, I lov'd the good-natured girl for it; took her at her word, stole her out of the window, and this morning made a very honest fellow happy in the possession of her.

*Cla.* And her name is Jacintha.



*Ran.* Ha!

*Cla.* Your amours are no secrets, fir. You see, you might as well have told me all the whole of last night's adventure; for you find I know——

*Ran.* All! Why, what do you know?

*Cla.* Nay, nothing, I only know that a gentleman's hat cannot be dropt in a lady's chamber——

*Ran.* The devil!

*Cla.* But a husband is such an odd, impertinent, awkward creature, that he will be stumbling over it.

*Ran.* Here hath been fine work. [*Afide.*] But how, in the name of wonder, should you know all this?

*Cla.* By being in the same house.

*Ran.* In the same house!

*Cla.* Ay, in the same house, a witness of the confusion you have made.

*Ran.* Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate! It must be so! [*Afide.*]

*Cla.* And let me tell you, fir, that even the dull, low-spirited diversions you ridicule in us tame creatures, are preferable to the romantic exploits that only wine can raise you to.

*Ran.* Yes, cousin: but I'll be even with you.

[*Afide.*]

*Cla.* If you reflect, cousin, you will find a great deal of wit in shocking a lady's modesty, disturbing her quiet, tainting her reputation, and ruining the peace of a whole family.

*Ran.* To be sure.

*Cla.* These are the high-mettled pleasures of you men of spirit, that the insipidity of the virtuous can

never arrive at. And can you in reality think your Burgundy, and your Bacchus, your Venus, and your Loves, an excuse for all this? Fie, cousin, fie!

*Ran.* No cousin.

*Cla.* What, dumb! I am glad you have modesty enough left not to go about to excuse yourself.

*Ran.* It is as you say; when we are sober and reflect but ever so little on the follies we commit, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet the very next minute we run again into the same absurdities.

*Cla.* What! moralizing, cousin! ha, ha, ha!

*Ran.* What you know is not half, not a hundredth part of the mischief of my last night's frolic; and yet the very next petticoat I saw this morning I must follow it, and be damn'd to me; though, for ought I know, poor Frankly's life may depend upon it.

*Cla.* Whose life, sir?

*Ran.* And here do I stand prating to you now.

*Cla.* Pray, good cousin, explain yourself.

*Ran.* Good cousin! She has it. [*Aside.*] Why, whilst I was making off with the wench, Bellamy and he were quarrelling about her; and though Jacintha and I made all the haste we could, we did not get to them before——

*Cla.* Before what? I'm frighten'd out of my wits!

*Ran.* Not that Frankly cared three half-pence for the girl.

*Cla.* But there was no mischief done, I hope?

*Ran.* Pho! a slight scratch; nothing at all, as the surgeon said: though he was but a queer looking son of a bitch of a surgeon, neither.

*Cla.* Good God! why, he should have the best that can be found in London.

*Ran.* Ay, indeed, so he should; that was what I was going for when I saw you. [*Sits down.*] They are all at Jack Meggot's hard by, and you will keep me here.

*Cla.* I keep you here! For Heaven's sake be gone.

*Ran.* Your tea is a damn'd while a coming.

*Cla.* You shall have no tea now, I assure you.

*Ran.* Nay! one dish.

*Cla.* No, positively you shall not stay.

*Ran.* Your commands are absolute, madam.

[*Going.*]

*Cla.* Then Frankly is true, and I only am to blame.

*Ran.* [*Returns.*] But I beg ten thousand pardons, cousin, that I should forget——

*Cla.* Forget what?

*Ran.* Forget to salute you.

*Cla.* Pshaw! how can you trifle at such a time as this?

*Ran.* A trifle! wrong not your beauty.

*Cla.* Lord, how teasing you are. There.

*Ran.* [*Kisses her.*] Poor thing; how uneasy she is. Nay, no ceremony, you shall not stir a step with me.

*Cla.* I do not intend it. This is downright provoking. [*Exit Ranger.*] Who's there?

*Enter Landlady.*

*Land.* Madam, did your ladyship call?

*Cla.* Does one Mr. Meggot live in this neighbourhood?

*Land.* Yes, madam, a fine gentleman, and keeps a noble house, and a world of company.

*Cla.* Very well; I don't want his history. I wonder my servants are not come yet.

*Land.* Lack-a-day, madam, they are all below.

*Cla.* Send up one then with a card to me. I must know the truth of this immediately. *[Exitant.]*

ACT V. SCENE I.

*A Room in Mr. STRICTLAND's House. Mr. and Mrs. STRICTLAND discovered; she weeping, and he writing.*

*Mrs. Strickland.*

**H**EIGH ho!

*Strick.* What can possibly be the occasion of that sigh, madam? you have yourself agreed to a maintenance, and a maintenance no dutchess need be ashamed of.

*Mrs. Str.* But the extremities of provocation that drove me to that agreement——

*Strick.* Were the effect of your own follies. Why do you disturb me? *[Writes on.]*

*Mrs. Str.* I would not willingly give you a moment's uneasiness; I but desire a fair and equal hearing: and if I satisfy you not in every point, then abandon me, discard me to the world, and its malicious tongues.

*Strick.* What was it you said? Damn this pen.

*Mrs. Str.* I say, Mr. Strickland, I would only——

*Strid.* You would only——You would only repeat what you have been saying this hour, I am innocent; and when I shewed you the letter I had taken from your maid, what was then your poor evasion, but that it was to Clarinda, and you were innocent.

*Mrs. Str.* Heaven knows, I am innocent.

*Strid.* But I know your Clarinda, your woman of honour, is your blind, your cover, your——But why do I distract myself about a woman I have no longer any concern with? Here, madam, is your fate. A letter to your brother in the country.

*Mrs. Str.* Sir——

*Str.* I have told him what a sister he has to receive, and how to bid her welcome.

*Mrs. Str.* Then my ruin is complete. My brother!

*Strid.* I must vindicate my own honour, else what will the world say?

*Mrs. Str.* That brother was my only hope, my only ground of patience. In his retirement I hoped my name might have been safe, and slept, till by some happy means you might at length have known me innocent, and pitied me.

*Strid.* Retirement! pretty soul! no, no; that face was never made for retirement; it is another sort of retiring you are fittest for. Ha! hark! What's that? [*A knocking at the door.*] Two gentle taps—and why but two! was that the signal, madam? Stir not, on your life.



*Mrs. Str.* Give me resolution, Heaven, to bear this usage, and keep it secret from the world.

[*Aside.*

*Strick.* I will have no signs, no items, no hem to tell him I am here. Ha! another tap. The gentleman is in haste, I find. [*Opens the door, and enter Tester.*] Tester! Why did you not come in, rascal? [*Beats him.*] All vexations meet to cross me.

*Test.* Lard, sir! what do you strike me for? my mistress ordered me never to come in where she was, without first knocking at the door.

*Strick.* Oh, cunning devil! Tester is too honest to be trusted.

*Mrs. Str.* Unhappy man; will nothing undeceive him?

[*Aside.*

*Test.* Sir, here is a letter.

*Strick.* To my wife?

*Test.* No, sir, to you. The servant waits below.

*Strick.* Art sure it is a servant?

*Test.* Sir! [*Staring.*] it is Mr. Buckle, sir.

*Strick.* I am mad: I know not what to say, or do, or think. But let's read: [*Reads to himself.*

"Sir, we cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strickland may possibly be ruined in your esteem, and in the voice of the world, only by the confusion which our affairs have made in your family, without offering all within our power to clear the misunderstanding between you. If you will give yourself the trouble but to step to Mr. Meggot's, where all parties will be, we doubt not but we can entirely satisfy your most flagrant suspicions, to the honour of Mrs. Strickland, and the quiet of your lives.

JACINTHA, JOHN BELLAMY.

Hey! Here is the whole gang witnessing for one another. They think I am an ass, and will be led by the nose to believe every thing. Call me a chair. [*Exit Tester.*] Yes, I will go to this rendezvous of enemies—I will—and find out all her plots, her artifices and contrivances: it will clear my conduct to her brother, and all her friends.

[*Exit Mr. Strickland.*]

*Mrs. Str.* Gone so abruptly! What can that let-  
ter be about? no matter; there is no way left to  
make us easy but by my disgrace, and I must learn  
to suffer; time and innocence will teach me to bear  
it patiently.

*Enter LUCETTA.*

*Luc.* Mrs. Bellamy, madam, (for my young la-  
dy is married) begs you would follow Mr. Strick-  
land to Mr. Meggot's; she makes no doubt but she  
shall be able to make you and my master easy.

*Mrs. Str.* But how came she to know any thing  
of the matter?

*Luc.* I have been with them, madam; I could  
not bear to see so good a lady ill-treated.

*Mrs. Str.* I am indeed, Lucetta, ill-treated: but  
I hope this day will be the last of it.

*Luc.* Madam Clarinda and Mr. Frankly will be  
there: and the young gentleman, madam, who was  
with you in this room last night.

*Mrs. Str.* Ha! if he is there, there may be  
hopes; and it is worth the trying.

*Luc.* Dear lady, let me call a chair.

*Mrs. Str.* I go with you. I cannot be more  
wretched than I am. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*A Room in J. MEGGOT'S House. Enter FRANKLY, RANGER, BELLAMY, JACINTHA, and J. MEGGOT.*

*Fran.* Oh, Ranger, this is news indeed! your cousin, and a lady of such fortune!

*Ran.* I have done the business for you: I tell you she's your own. She loves you.

*Fran.* *You make my heart dance with joy.* "Words are to faint to tell the joy I feel."

*Ran.* I have put that heart of hers into such a flutter, that I'll lay a hundred guineas, with the assistance which this lady has promised me, I fix her yours directly.

*Jac.* Ay, ay, Mr. Frankly, we have a design upon her which cannot fail. But you must obey orders.

*Fran.* Most willingly: but remember, dear lady, I have more than life at stake.

*Jac.* Away then in the next room; for she is this instant coming hither.

*Fran.* Hither! you surprise me more and more.

*Jac.* Here is a message from her, by which she desires leave to wait on me this afternoon.

*Ran.* Only for the chance of seeing you here, I assure ye.

*Fran.* Let me hug thee; though I know not how to believe it.

*Ran.* Psha! pr'ythee don't stifle me! It is a busy day, a very busy day.

*J. Meg.* Thou art the most unaccountable creature in life.

*Ran.* But the most lucky one, Jack, if I succeed for Frankly as I have for Bellamy, and my heart whispers me I shall. Come in, most noble Mr. Buckle: and what have you to propose?

*Enter BUCKLE.*

*Buc.* A lady, madam, in a chair, says her name is Clarinda.

*Jac.* Desire her to walk up.

*Bel.* How could you let her wait? [*Exit Buckle.* You must excuse him, madam; Buckle is a true bachelor's servant, and knows no manners.

*Jac.* Away, away, Mr. Frankly, and stay till I call you. A rap with my fan shall be the signal. [*Exit Frankly.*] We make very free with your house, Mr. Meggot.

*J. Meg.* Oh, you could not oblige me more.

*Enter CLARINDA.*

*Cla.* Dear Mrs. Bellamy, pity my confusion. I am to wish you joy and ask your pardon all in a breath. I know not what to say; I am quite ashamed of my last night's behaviour.

*Jac.* Come, come, Clarinda, it is all well; all is over and forgot. Mr. Bellamy— [*Salute.*

*Cla.* I wish you joy, sir, with all my heart, and should have been very sorry if any folly of mine had prevented it.

*Bel.* Madam, I am oblig'd to you.

*Cla.* I see nothing of Mr. Frankly! my mind misgives me. [*Aside.*

*Ran.* And so, you came hither purely out of friendship, good-nature, and humility.

*Cla.* Purely.

*Ran.* To confess your offences, to beg pardon, and to make reparation.

*Cla.* Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

*J. Meg.* The most so of any thing in life, I think.

*Ran.* A very whimsical business for so fine a lady, and an errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear cousin.

*Jac.* Never, I dare swear, if I may judge by the awkward concern she shews in delivering it.

*Cla.* Concern! Lard, well, I protest, you are all exceeding pretty company! Being settled for life, Jaçintha, gives an ease to the mind that brightens conversation strangely.

*Jac.* I am sorry, with all my heart, you are not in the same condition; for as you are, my dear, you are horribly *chagriné*.

*Ran.* But with a little of our help, madam, the lady may recover, and be very good company.

*Cla.* Hum! what does he mean, Mr. Bellamy?

*Bel.* Ask him, madam.

*Cla.* Indeed I shall not give myself the trouble.

*Jac.* Then you know what he means.

*Cla.* Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

*Jac.* It is something you won't let him explain, I find.



*Enter BUCKLE and whispers MEGGOT.*

*J. Meg.* Very well. Desire him to walk into the parlour. Madam, the gentleman is below.

*Jac.* Then every one to your posts. You know your cues.

*Ran.* I warrant ye.

*[Exeunt gentlemen.]*

*Cla.* All gone! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

*Jac.* And I, my dear Clarinda, have something which I do not know how to tell you: but it must be known sooner or latter.

*Cla.* What's the matter?

*Jac.* Poor Mr. Frankly——

*Cla.* You fright me out of my senses!

*Jac.* Has no wounds but what you can cure. Ha, ha, ha!

*Cla.* Psha! I am angry.

*Jac.* Psha! You are pleased; and will be more so, when I tell you, this man, whom fortune has thrown in your way, is, in rank and temper, the man in the world who suits you best for a husband.

*Cla.* Husband! I say, husband, indeed! Where will this end? *[Aside.]*

*Jac.* His very soul is yours, and he only waits an opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next room. Shall I call him in?

*Cla.* My dear girl, hold!

*Jac.* How foolish is this coyness now, Clarinda! If the men were here indeed, something might be said——And so, Mr. Frankly——

*Cla.* How can you be so teasing?

*Jac.* Nay, I am in downright earnest: and, to shew how particular I have been in my inquiries, "though I know you have a spirit above regarding  
"the modish, paltry way of a Smithfield bargain"  
——his fortune——

*Cla.* I don't care what his fortune is.

*Jac.* Don't you so? Then you are farther gone than I thought you were.

*Cla.* No, Psha! pr'ythee, I don't mean so neither.

*Jac.* I don't care what you mean: but you won't like him the worse, I hope, for having a fortune superior to your own. Now shall I call him in?

*Cla.* Pho, dear girl——Some other time.

*Jac.* [*Raps with her fan.*] That's the signal, and here he is. You shall not stir: I positively will leave you together. [*Exit Jacintha.*]

*Cla.* I tremble all over.

*Enter FRANKLY.*

*Fran.* Pardon this freedom, madam: but I hope our having so luckily met with a common friend in Mrs. Bellamy——

*Cla.* Sir!

*Fran.* Makes any farther apology for my behaviour last night absolutely unnecessary.

*Cla.* So far, Mr. Frankly, that I think the apology should be rather on my side, for the impertinent bustle I made about her.

*Fran.* This behaviour gives me hopes, madam: pardon the construction—but from the little bustle

you made about the lady, may I not hope you was not quite indifferent about the gentleman?

*Cla.* Have a care of being too sanguine in your hopes: might not a love of power, or the satisfaction of shewing that power, or the dear pleasure of abusing that power; might not these have been foundation enough for more than what I did?

*Fran.* Charming woman! With most of your sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever power your beauty gives, your good-nature will allow you no other use of it than to oblige.

*Cla.* This is the height of compliment, Mr. Frankly.

*Fran.* Not in my opinion, I assure you, madam; and I am now going to put it to the trial.

*Cla.* What is he going to say now? [*Aside.*]

*Fran.* What is it that ails me, that I cannot speak? Psha! he here! [*Aside.*]

*Enter RANGER.*

Interrupted! impertinent!

*Ran.* There is no fight so ridiculous as a pair of your true lovers. Here are you two now, bowing and cringing, and keeping a passion secret from one another, that is no secret to all the house beside. And if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the town within these two hours.

*Cla.* What do you mean?

*Fran.* Ranger——

*Ran.* Do you be quiet, can't ye? [*Aside.*] But it is over, I suppose, cousin, and you have given him your consent.

*Cla.* Sir, the liberties you are pleas'd to take with me——

*Ran.* Oh! in your airs still, are you? Why then, Mr. Frankly, there is a certain letter of yours, sir, to this lady.——

*Cla.* A letter to me!

*Ran.* Ay! to you, madam.

*Fran.* Ha! what of that letter?

*Ran.* It is only fallen into Mr. Strickland's hands, that is all; and he has read it.

*Fran.* Read it!

*Ran.* Ay, read it to all his family at home, and to all the company below: and if some stop be not put to it, it will be read in all the coffee-houses in town.

*Fran.* A stop! this sword shall put a stop to it, or I will perish in the attempt.

*Ran.* But will that sword put a stop to the talk of the town?—Only make it talk the faster, take my word for it.

*Cla.* This is all a trick.

*Ran.* A trick! Is it so? you shall soon see that, my fine cousin. [Exit Ranger.]

*Fran.* It is but too true, I fear. There is such a letter, which I gave Lucetta. Can you forgive me? Was I much to blame, when I could neither see nor hear of you?

*Cla.* [Tenderly.] You give yourself, Mr. Frankly, a thousand more uneasinesses than you need about me.

*Fran.* If this uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you——Interrupted again!

*Cla.* This is downright malice. [Aside.]

*Enter RANGER, followed by JACINTHA, Mr. STRICTLAND, BELLAMY, and MEGGOT.*

*Ran.* Enter, enter, gentlemen and lady. Now you shall see whether this is a trick or no.

*Cla.* Mr. Strictland here! What is all this?

*Jac.* Do not be uneasy, my dear; we will explain it to you.

*Fran.* I cannot bear this trifling, Ranger, when my heart is on the rack.

*Ran.* Come this way then, and learn.

*[Jacinta, Clarinda, Frankly and Ranger retire.*

*[Mr. Strictland, Bellamy, and Meggot advance.*

*Striā.* Why, I know not well what to say. This has a face. This letter may as well agree with Clarinda, as with my wife, as you have told the story; and Lucetta explain'd it so: but she, for a fixpenny piece, would have constru'd it the other way.

*J. Meg.* But, sir, if we produce this Mr. Frankly to you, and he owns himself the author of this letter——

*Bel.* And if Clarinda likewise be brought before your face to encourage his addresses, there can be no farther room for doubt.

*Striā.* No. Let that appear, and I shall, I think I shall, be satisfied——But yet it cannot be——

*Bel.* Why not? Hear me, sir. *[They talk.*

*[Jacinta, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger advance.*

*Jac.* In short, Clarinda, unless the affair is made up directly, a separation, with all the obloquy on her side, must be the consequence.



*Gla.* Poor Mrs. Strickland ! I pity her : but for him, he deserves all he feels, were it ten times what it is.

*Jac.* It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear his impertinence.

*Gla.* With all my heart. You will do what you please with me.

*Fran.* Generous creature !

*Striā.* Ha ! here she is, and with her the very man I saw deliver the letter to Lucetta. I do begin to fear I have made myself a fool. Now for the proof. Here is a letter, sir, which has given me great disturbance, and these gentlemen assure me it was writ by you.

*Fran.* That letter, sir, upon my honour, I left this morning with Lucetta, for this lady.

*Striā.* For that lady ! and Frankly, the name at the bottom, is not feign'd, but your real name ?

*Fran.* Frankly is my name.

*Striā.* I see, I feel myself ridiculous.

*Jac.* Now, Mr. Strickland, I hope——

*J. Meg.* Ay, ay ; a clear case.

*Striā.* I am satisfied, and will go this instant to Mrs. Strickland.

*Ran.* Why then the devil fetch me if this would satisfy me.

*Striā.* What's that ?

*Ran.* Nay, nothing ; it is no affair of mine.

*Bel.* What do you mean, Ranger ?

*Striā.* Ay, what do you mean ? I will know before I stir.

*Ran.* With all my heart, fir. Cannot you see that all this may be a concerted matter between them?

*Fran.* Ranger, you know I can resent.

*Strid.* Go on; I will defend you, let who will resent it.

*Ran.* Why then, fir, I declare myself your friend: and were I as you, nothing but their immediate marriage should convince me.

*Strid.* Sir, you're right, and are my friend indeed. Give me your hand.

*Ran.* Nay, were I to hear her say, I, Clarinda, take thee, Charles, I would not believe them, 'till I saw them a-bed together. Now resent it as you will.

*Strid.* Ay, fir, as you will: but nothing less shall convince me: and so, my fine lady, if you are in earnest.—

*Cla.* Sure, Mr. Strictland.—

*Strid.* Nay, no flouncing; you cannot escape.

*Ran.* Why, Frankly, hast no soul?

*Fran.* I pity her confusion.

*Ran.* Pity her confusion!—the man's a fool—Here, take her hand.

*Fran.* Thus, on my knees, then let me ravish, with your hand, your heart.

*Cla.* Ravish it you cannot; for it is with all my heart I give it you.

*Strid.* I am satisfied.

*Cla.* And so am I, now it is once over.

*Ran.* And so am I, my dainty cousin; and I wish you joy of a man your whole sex would go to cuffs

for, if they knew him but half so well as I do—  
Ha ! she's here ; this is more than I bargain'd for.

[*Aside.*]

JACINTHA leads in Mrs. STRICTLAND.

*Striā.* [*Embracing Mrs. Strictland.*] Madam, reproach me not with my folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

*Mrs. Str.* Reproach you ! no ! if ever you hear the least reflection pass my lips, forsake me in that instant ; or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

*Striā.* It is enough. I am ashamed to talk to thee. This letter, which I wrote to your brother, thus I tear in pieces, and with it part for ever with my jealousy.

*Mrs. Str.* This is a joy indeed ! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting, to make it lasting.

*Ran.* What the devil is coming now ? [*Aside.*]

*Mrs. Str.* Be assur'd, every other suspicion of me was as unjust as your last : though, perhaps, you had more foundations for your fears.

*Ran.* She won't tell, sure, for her own sake.

[*Aside.*]

*Mrs. Str.* All must be clear'd before my heart will be at ease.

*Ran.* It looks plaguy like it, though ! [*Aside.*]

*Striā.* What mean you ? I am all attention.

*Mrs. Str.* There was a man, as you suspected, in my chamber last night.

*Striā.* Ha ! take care, I shall relapse.

*Mrs. Str.* That gentleman was he——

*Ran.* Here is a devil for you! [*Aside.*

*Mrs. Str.* Let him explain the rest.

*Ran.* A frolic, a mere frolic, on my life.

*Strið.* A frolic! Zounds! [*They interpose.*

*Ran.* Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declar'd yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask, I shall be ready to give.

*Strið.* Be quick then, and ease me of my pain.

*Ran.* Why then, as I was strolling about last night upon the look-out, I must confess chance, and chance only, convey'd me to your house; where I espied a ladder of ropes most invitingly fasten'd to the window——

*Jac.* Which ladder I had fasten'd for my escape.

*Strið.* Proceed.

*Ran.* Up mounted I, and up I should have gone, if it had been in the garret; *it's all one to Ranger.* I open'd one door, then another, and to my great surprise, the whole house was silent: at last, I stole into a room where this lady was undressing.

*Strið.* 'Sdeath and the devil! you did not dare sure——

*Ran.* I don't know whether I had dared, or no, if I had not heard the maid say something of her master's being jealous. Oh, damn me, thought I, then the work is half done to my hands.

*Jac.* Do you mind that, Mr. Strickland?

*Strið.* I do——I do most feelingly.

*Ran.* The maid grew saucy, and most conveniently to my wishes, was turn'd out of the room; and if you had not had the best wife in the world——

*Strid.* 'Ounds, fir, but what right have you——

*Ran.* What right, fir? if you will be jealous of your wife without a cause; if you will be out at that time of night, when you might have been so much better employ'd at home: we young fellows think we have a right——

*Strid.* No joking, I beseech you; you know not what I feel.

*Ran.* Then seriously, I was mad, or drunk enough, call it which you will, to be very rude to this lady, for which I ask both her pardon and yours. I am an odd sort of a fellow, perhaps; but I am above telling you or any man a lie, damn me, if I am not.

*Strid.* I must, I cannot but believe you; and for the future, madam, you shall find a heart ready to love and trust you. No tears, I beg; I cannot bear them.

*Mrs. Str.* I cannot speak, and yet there is a favour, fir——

*Strid.* I understand you; and as a proof of the sincerity with which I speak, I beg it as a favour, of this lady in particular, [*To Clarinda*] and of all the company in general, to return to my house immediately, where every thing, Mr. Bellamy, shall be settled to your entire satisfaction. No thanks, I have not deserv'd them.

*J. Meg.* I beg your pardon, fir, the fiddles are ready; Mrs. Bellamy has promis'd me her hand,



and I won't part with one of you till midnight; and if you are as well satisfied as you pretend to be, let our friend Rattle here begin the ball with Mrs. Strictland; for he seems to be the hero of the day.

*Strid.* As you and the company please.

*Ran.* Why, this is honest; continue but in this humour, and faith, sir, you may trust me to run about your house like a spaniel. I cannot sufficiently admire at the whimsicalness of my good fortune, in being so instrumental to this general happiness. Bellamy, Frankly, I wish you joy with all my heart, though I had rather you should be married than I, for all that. Never did matrimony appear to me with a smile upon her face till this instant.

*Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,  
When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair,  
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.*

A dance. Exeunt omnes.



---

## EPILOGUE.

---

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

---

*THOUGH* the young smarts, I see, begin to sneer,  
And the old sinners cast a wicked leer,  
Be not alarm'd, ye fair—You've nought to fear.  
No wanton hint, no loose ambiguous sense,  
Shall flatter vicious taste at your expence.  
Leaving, for once, these shameless arts in vogue,  
We give a fable for the epilogue.

*An ass there was, our author bade me say,  
Who needs must write—He did—And wrote a play.  
The parts were cast to various beasts and fowl:  
Their stage a barn;—the manager an owl.  
The house was cramm'd at six, with friends and foes;  
Rakes, wits, and critics, citizens, and beaux.  
These characters appear'd in different shapes  
Of tigers, foxes, horses, bulls, and apes;  
With others too, of lower rank and station:  
A perfect abstract of the brute creation.  
Each, as he felt, mark'd out the author's faults,  
And thus the connoisseurs express'd their thoughts.  
The critic-curs first snarl'd—the rules are broke,  
Time, place, and action, sacrific'd to joke.  
The goats cry'd out, 'twas formal, dull, and chaste—  
Not writ for beasts of gallantry and taste.*

## EPILOGUE.

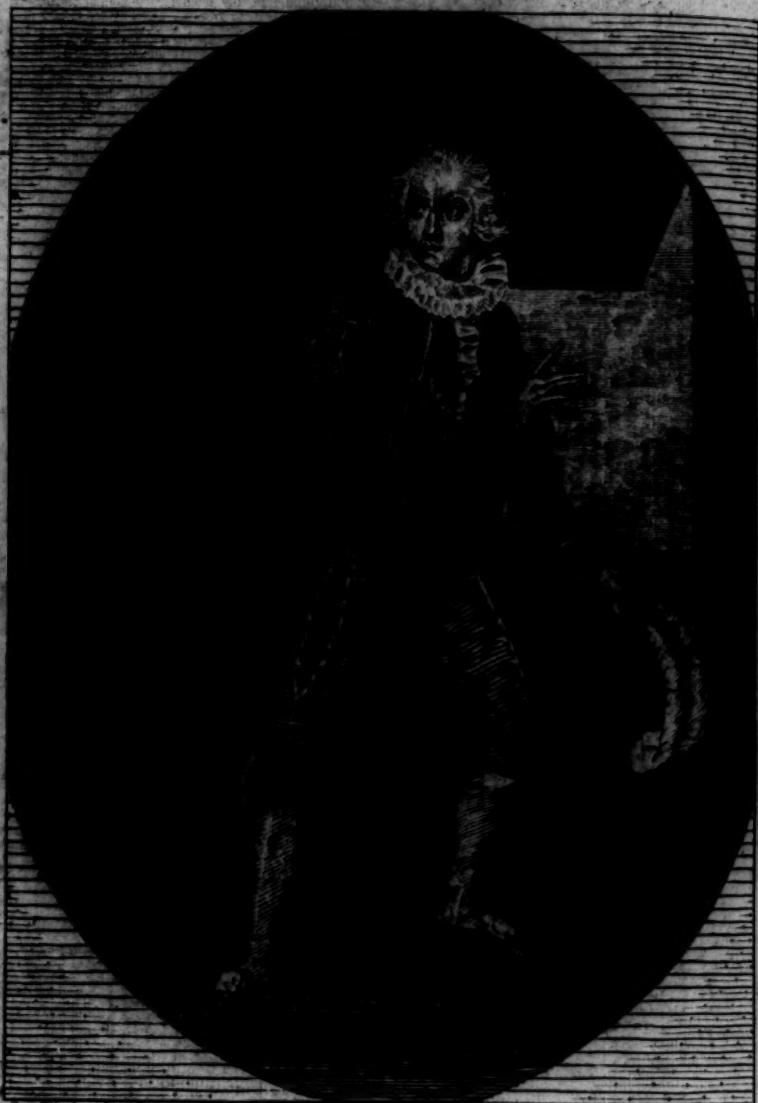
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*The horned cattle were in piteous taking,  
At fornication, rapes, and cuckold-making.  
The tigers swore, he wanted fire and passion;  
The apes condemn'd—because it was the fashion.  
The generous steeds allow'd him proper merit:  
Here mark'd his faults, and there approv'd his spirit.  
While brother bards bray'd forth with usual spleen,  
And, as they heard, exploded every scene.  
When Reynard's thoughts were ask'd, the strutting sage,  
Fam'd for hypocrisy, and worn with age,  
Condemn'd the shameless licence of the stage.  
At which the monkey skip'd from box to box,  
And whisper'd round the judgment of the fox;  
Abus'd the moderns; talk'd of Rome and Greece;  
Bilk'd ev'ry box-keeper; and damn'd the piece.*

*Now ev'ry fable has a moral to it—  
Be churchman, statesman, any thing—but poet.  
In law, or physic, quack in what you will,  
Cant and grimace conceal the want of skill;  
Secure in these, his gravity may pass—  
But here no artifice can hide the ass.*







*De Witte pinx.*

*Ferguson sculp.*

**M. DIMOND as DON FELIX.**

*Either my eye, deceived me, or I saw a man within.*

Dublin Published by W Jones, N<sup>o</sup> 86 Dame-street.





Dublin Published by W Jones, N° 86 Dame-Street.



**THE WONDER**  
**A**  
**WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET!**

**A**  
**COMEDY.**  
**By Mrs. CARROLL, *of the* CENTLIVRE.**

**ADAPTED FOR**  
**THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,**

**AS PERFORMED AT THE**  
**THEATRES-ROYAL,**  
**DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.**

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"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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**M DCC XCIV.**

# THE WONDER

WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET

COMEDY

BY MISS CEMENT-LIVER



PRINTED BY J. GARRATT

FOR WILLIAM JONES & CO. LONDON

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## THE WONDER.

---

SECRECY and the sex are proverbially disunited.—In the cause of gallantry however, their silence has been seldom disputed. Upon the single exertion of that prudent quality Mrs. CENTLIVRE has built the present play. Whether the ladies take the implication in the title kindly or not, their value for the ingenious Author may demonstrate.

The WONDER is clearly the most entertaining play built upon the domestic Caution and irrational Jealousy, which so long marked the Spanish Character. The character of Don FELIX is in the highest degree natural and pleasing—His quick succession of doubts and tenderness—His angry departure, merely to return more enslaved—His ready sensibility and impatience of affront—are not peculiarly national and local; they are the feelings of most men in situations any way similar.

The lower Characters of the Play are natural, and constructed with much knowledge of Stage Effect.—The Theatre has, perhaps, few pieces which so completely can be considered as the freeholds of Dramatic fame.



---

## PROLOGUE.

---

*OUR Author fears the critics of the stage,  
Who, like barbarians, spare nor sex nor age ;  
She trembles at those censors in the pit,  
Who think good-nature shews a want of wit.  
Such malice, Oh ! what Muse can undergo it ?  
To save themselves, they always damn the poet.  
Our author flies from such a partial jury,  
As wary lovers from the nymphs of Drury :  
To the few candid judges for a smile  
She humbly sues to recompense her toil ;  
To the bright circle of the fair she next  
Commits her cause, with anxious doubts perplext.  
Where can she with such hopes of favour kneel  
As to those judges who her frailties feel ?  
A few mistakes her sex may well excuse,  
And such a plea no woman should refuse :  
If she succeeds, a woman gains applause ;  
What female but must favour such a cause ?  
Her faults——whate'er they are——e'en pass 'em by,  
And only on her beauties fix your eye.  
In plays, like vessels floating on the sea,  
There's none so wise to know their destiny :  
In this, howe'er, the pilot's skill appears,  
While by the stars his constant course he steers :  
Rightly our Author does her judgment shew,  
That for her safety she relies on you.*

PROLOGUE.

v

*Your approbation, Fair Ones! can't but move  
Those stubborn hearts which first you taught to love.  
The men must all applaud this play of ours,  
For who dare see with other eyes than yours?*

---



---

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---



---

COVENT-GARDEN.

---



---

*Men.*

Don LOPEZ, <i>a grandee of Portugal,</i>	-	Mr. Booth.
Don FELIX, <i>his son, in love with Violante,</i>	-	Mr. Lewis.
FREDERICK, <i>a merchant,</i>	-	Mr. Macready.
Don PEDRO, <i>father to Violante,</i>	-	Mr. Quick.
Colonel BRITON, <i>a Scotchman,</i>	-	Mr. Farren.
GIBBY, <i>his footman,</i>	-	Mr. Fearon.
LISSARDO, <i>footman to Felix,</i>	-	Mr. Ryder.

*Women.*

Donna VIOLANTE, <i>designed for a nun by</i>	}	Mrs. Pope.
<i>her father, in love with Felix,</i>		
Donna ISABELLA, <i>sister to Felix,</i>	-	Mrs. Lewis.
INIS, <i>her maid,</i>	-	Mrs. Mattocks.
FLORA, <i>maid to Donna Violante,</i>	-	Mrs. Rock.

*Alguazil, attendants, servants, &c.*

SCENE, *Lisbon.*

---

---

THE  
W O N D E R.

---

ACT I. SCENE I.

---

*A Street. Enter DON LOPEZ meeting FREDERICK.*

---

*Frederick.*

My lord, Don Lopez.

*Lop.* How d'ye, Frederick?

*Fred.* At your lordship's service. I am glad to see you look so well, my lord. I hope Antonio's out of danger?

*Lop.* Quite contrary; his fever increases they tell me; and the surgeons are of opinion his wound is mortal.

*Fred.* Your son, Don Felix, is safe I hope.

*Lop.* I hope so too; but they offer large rewards to apprehend him.

*Fred.* When heard your lordship from him?

*Lop.* Not since he went: I forbid him writing till the public news gave him an account of Antonio's health. Letters might be intercepted, and the place of his abode discovered.

*Fred.* "Your caution was good, my lord. Tho' I  
"am impatient to hear from Felix, yet his safety  
"is my chief concern. Fortune has maliciously

" struck a bar between us in the affairs of life, but  
" she has done me the honour to unite our souls.

" *Lop.* I am not ignorant of the friendship be-  
" tween my son and you : I have heard him com-  
" mend your morals, and lament your want of no-  
" ble birth.

" *Fred.* That's nature's fault, my lord. It is  
" some comfort not to owe one's misfortunes to  
" one's self; yet it is impossible not to regret the  
" want of noble birth.

" *Lop.* 'Tis a pity indeed such excellent parts as  
" you are master of, should be eclipsed by mean ex-  
" traction.

" *Fred.* Such commendation would make me vain,  
" my lord; did you not cast in the allay of my ex-  
" traction.

" *Lop.* There's no condition of life without its  
" cares, and it is the perfection of a man to wear  
" 'em as easy as he can : this unfortunate duel of  
" my son's does not pass without impresson; but  
" since it is past prevention, all my concern is now  
" how he may escape the punishment." If Anto-  
" nio dies, Felix shall for England. You have been  
" there; what sort of people are the English?

./ *Fred.* My lord, the English are by nature, what  
the ancient Romans were by discipline, courageous,  
bold, hardy, and in love with liberty. Liberty is  
the idol of the English, under whose banner all the  
nation lifts: give but the word for liberty, and  
straight more armed legions would appear, than  
France and Philip keep in constant pay.



*Lop.* I like their principles: who does not wish for freedom in all degrees of life? though common prudence sometimes makes us act against it, as I am now obliged to do; for I intend to marry my daughter to Don Guzman, whom I expect from Holland every day, whither he went to take possession of a large estate left him by his uncle.

*Fred.* You will not surely sacrifice the lovely Isabella to age, avarice, and a fool; pardon the expression, my lord, but my concern for your beautiful daughter, transports me beyond that good manners which I ought to pay your lordship's presence.

*Lop.* I can't deny the justness of the character, Frederick; but you are not insensible what I have suffered by these wars; and he has two things which render him very agreeable to me for a son-in-law, he is rich and well-born: as for his being a fool, I don't conceive how that can be any blot in a husband, who is already possessed of a good estate.—A poor fool indeed is a very scandalous thing, and so are your poor wits in my opinion, who have nothing to be vain of but the inside of their skulls. Now for Don Guzman, I know I can rule him as I think fit. This is acting the politick part, Frederick, without which, it is impossible to keep up the port of this life.

*Fred.* But have you no consideration for your daughter's welfare, my lord?

*Lop.* Is a husband of twenty thousand crowns a year no consideration? Now I think it a very good consideration.

*Fred.* One way, my lord. But what will the world say of such a match?

*Lop.* Sir, I value not the world a button.

*Fred.* I cannot think your daughter can have any inclination for such a husband.

*Lop.* There, I believe, you are pretty much in the right, though it is a secret which I never had the curiosity to enquire into, nor I believe ever shall.—Inclination, quotha! Parents would have a fine time on't if they consulted their children's inclinations! "I'll venture you a wager, that in all the garrison towns in Spain and Portugal during the late war, there was not three women who have not had an inclination for every officer in the whole army; does it therefore follow that their fathers ought to pimp for them? No, no, fir, it is not a father's business to follow his children's inclinations till he makes himself a beggar.

*Fred.* But this is of another nature, my lord.

*Lop.* Look ye, fir, I resolve she shall marry Don Guzman the moment he arrives. Though I could not govern my son, I will my daughter, I assure you.

*Fred.* This match, my lord, is more preposterous than that which you proposed to your son, from whence arose this fatal quarrel.—Don Antonio's sister, Elvira, wanted beauty only, but Guzman every thing but—

*Lop.* Money—and that will purchase every thing; and so adieu.

[*Exit.*]

*Fred.* Monstrous! these are the resolutions which destroy the comforts of matrimony.—He is rich and

well-born; powerful arguments indeed! could I but add them to the friendship of Don Felix what might I not hope? But a merchant and a grandee of Spain are inconsistent names.—Lissardo! from whence came you?

*Enter LISSARDO in a riding-habit.*

*Liss.* That letter will inform you, sir.

*Fred.* I hope your master's safe.

*Liss.* I left him so; I have another to deliver which requires haste.—Your most humble servant, sir.

[*Bowing.*]

*Fred.* To Violante, I suppose.

*Liss.* The same.

[*Exit.*]

*Fred.* [*Reads.*] 'Dear Frederick! the two chief blessings of this life, are a friend and a mistress; to be debarred the sight of those is not to live. I hear nothing of Antonio's death, and therefore resolve to venture to thy house this evening, impatient to see Violante, and embrace my friend. Your's.

FELIX.

Pray Heaven he comes undiscovered.—Ha! Colonel Briton!

*Enter Colonel BRITON in a riding-habit.*

*Col.* Frederick, I rejoice to see thee.

*Fred.* What brought you to Lisbon, colonel?

*Col.* *La fortune de la guerre*, as the French say. I have commanded these three last years in Spain, but my country has thought fit to strike up a peace, and give us good Protestants leave to hope for Chris-

tian burial: so I resolved to take Lisbon in my way home.

*Fred.* If you are not provided of a lodging, colonel, pray command my house while you stay.

*Col.* If I were sure I should not be troublesome I would accept your offer, Frederick.

*Fred.* So far from trouble, colonel, I shall take it as a particular favour. What have we here?

*Col.* My footman: this is our country dress, you must know, which for the honour of Scotland I make all my servants wear.

*Enter GIBBY in a Highland dress.*

*Gib.* What mun I de with the horses, and like yer honour? They will tack cald gin they stand in the caufeway.

*Fred.* Oh, I'll take care of them. What, ho! Vasquez.

*Enter VASQUEZ.*

Put those horses which that honest fellow will shew you into my stable, do you hear, and feed them well.

*Vas.* Yes, sir.—Sir, by my master's orders, I am, sir, your most obsequious humble servant. Be pleased to lead the way.

*Gib.* 'Sbleed! gang your gate, sir, and I fall follow ye. Ise tee hungry to feed on compliments.

[*Exit.*

*Fred.* Ha, ha! a comical fellow.—Well, how do you like our country, colonel?

*Col.* Why faith, Frederick, a man might pass his time agreeably enough within side of a nunnery; but to behold such troops of soft, plump, tender, melting, wishing, nay, willing girls too, thro' a damn'd grate, gives us Britons strong temptations to plunder. Ah, Frederick! your priests are wicked rogues; they immure Beauty for their own proper use, and shew it only to the laity to create desires and inflame account, that they may purchase pardons at a dearer rate.

*Fred.* I own wenching is something more difficult here than in England, where womens' liberties are subservient to their inclinations, and husbands seem of no effect but to take care of the children which their wives provide.

*Col.* And does restraint get the better of inclination with your women here? No, I'll be sworn not even in fourscore. Don't I know the constitution of the Spanish ladies?

*Fred.* And of all the ladies where you come, colonel; you were ever a man of gallantry.

*Col.* Ah, Frederick! the kirk half starves us Scotsmen. We are kept so sharp at home that we feed like cannibals abroad. Hark ye, hast thou never a pretty acquaintance now that thou wouldst consign over to a friend for half an hour, ha?

*Fred.* Faith, colonel, I am the worst pimp in christendom; you had better trust to your own luck: the women will soon find you out, I warrant you.

*Col.* Ay, but it is dangerous foraging in an enemy's country; and since I have some hopes of seeing



my own again, I had rather purchase my pleasure than run the hazard of a ffiletto in my guts. "Egad, I think I must e'en marry, and sacrifice "my body for the good of my soul." Wilt thou recommend me to a wife then, one that is willing to exchange her moidores for English liberty? ha, friend?

*Fred.* She must be very handsome, I suppose.

*Col.* The handfomer the better—but be sure she has a nose.

*Fred.* Ay, ay, and some gold.

*Col.* Oh, very much gold; I shall never be able to swallow the matrimonial pill if it be not well gilded.

*Fred.* Poh! beauty will make it slide down nimbly.

*Col.* At first perhaps it may; but the second or third dose will choke me.—I confess, Frederick, women are the prettiest playthings in nature; but gold, substantial gold! gives 'em the air, the mien, the shape, the grace, and beauty of a goddess.

*Fred.* And has not gold the same divinity in their eyes, colonel?

*Col.* Too often—"Money is the very god of "marriage; the poets dress him in a saffron robe, "by which they figure out the golden deity, and "his lighted torch blazons those mighty charms "which encourage us to lift under his banner."

*None marry now for love, no, that's a jest:  
The self-same bargain serves for wife and beast.*

*Fred.* You are always gay, colonel. Come, shall we take a refreshing glass at my house, and consider what has been said?

*Col.* I have two or three compliments to discharge for some friends, and then I shall wait on you with pleasure. Where do you live?

*Fred.* At yon' corner-house with the green rails.

*Col.* In the close of the evening I will endeavour to kiss your hand. Adieu. *[Exit.*

*Fred.* I shall expect you with impatience. *[Exit.*

SCENE II.

*A Room in Don LOPEZ's House. Enter ISABELLA and INIS her Maid.*

*Inis.* For goodness sake, madam, where are you going in this pet?

*Isab.* Any where to avoid matrimony. The thoughts of a husband is as terrible to me as the sight of a hobgoblin.

*Inis.* Ay, of an old husband: but if you may choose for yourself, I fancy matrimony would be no such frightful thing to you.

*Isab.* You are pretty much in the right, Inis: but to be forced into the arms of an idiot, "a sneaking, "snivelling, drivelling, avaricious fool!" who has neither person to please the eye, sense to charm the ear, nor generosity to supply those defects. Ah, Inis! what pleasant lives women lead in England, where duty wears no fetter but inclination! The custom of our country enslaves us from our very

cradles, first to our parents, next to our husbands, and when Heaven is so kind to rid us of both these, our brothers still usurp authority, and expect a blind obedience from us; so that maids, wives, or widows, we are little better than slaves to the tyrant, man. Therefore, to avoid their power, I resolve to cast myself into a monastery.

*Inis.* That is, you'll cut your own throat to avoid another's doing it for you. Ah, madam, those eyes tell me you have no nun's flesh about you. A monastery, quotha!—where you'll wish yourself into the green-sickness in a month.

*Isab.* What care I? there will be no man to plague me.

*Inis.* No; nor, what's much worse, to please you, neither—Odslife, madam, you are the first woman that ever despaired in a Christian country—Were I in your place——

*Isab.* Why, what would your wisdom do if you were?

*Inis.* I'd embark with the first fair wind with all my jewels, and seek my fortune on t'other side the water: no shore can treat you worse than your own. There's ne'er a father in Christendom should make me marry any man against my will.

*Isab.* I am too great a coward to follow your advice. I must contrive some way to avoid Don Guzman, and yet stay in my own country.

*Enter DON LOPEZ.*

*Lop.* Must you so, mistress? but I shall take care to prevent you. [*Aside.*]—Isabella, whither are you going, my child?

*Isab.* "Ha! my father!"—To church, fir.

*Inis.* The old rogue has certainly overheard her.

[*Aside.*

*Lop.* Your devotion must needs be very strong, or your memory very weak, my dear. Why, vespers are over for this night. Come, come, you shall have a better errand to church than to say your prayers there. Don Guzman is arrived in the river, and I expect him ashore to-morrow.

*Isab.* Ha! to-morrow!

*Lop.* He writes me word that his estate in Holland is worth twelve thousand crowns a-year, which, together with what he had before, will make thee the happiest wife in Lisbon.

*Isab.* And the most unhappy woman in the world.—Oh, fir, if I have any power in your heart, if the tenderness of a father be not quite extinct, hear me with patience.

*Lop.* No objection against the marriage, and I will hear whatsoever thou hast to say.

*Isab.* That's torturing me on the rack, and forbidding me to groan. Upon my knees I claim the privilege of flesh and blood.

[*Kneels.*

*Lop.* I grant it; thou shalt have an armful of flesh and blood to-morrow. Flesh and blood, quotha! Heaven forbid I should deny thee flesh and blood, my girl.

*Inis.* Here's an old dog for you.

[*Aside.*

*Isab.* Do not mistake, fir. The fatal stroke which separates soul and body is not more terrible to the thoughts of sinners, than the name of Guzman to my ear.

*Lop.* Puh, puh! you lie, you lie.

*Ifab.* My frightened heart beats hard against my breast, as if it sought a passage to your feet, to beg you'd change your purpose.

*Lop.* A very pretty speech this; if it were turned into blank verse, it would serve for a tragedy. Why thou hast more wit than I thought thou hadst, child. I fancy this was all *extempore*; I don't believe thou didst ever think one word on't before.

*Inis.* Yes, but she has, my lord; for I have heard her say the same things a thousand times.

*Lop.* How, how—What, do you top your second-hand jests upon your father, huffy, who knows better what's good for you than you do yourself? Remember 'tis your duty to obey.

*Ifab.* [*Rising.*] I never disobeyed before, and I wish I had not reason now; but nature hath got the better of my duty, and makes me loathe the harsh commands you lay.

*Lop.* Ha, ha! very fine! ha, ha!

*Ifab.* Death itself would be more welcome.

*Lop.* Are you sure of that?

*Ifab.* I am your daughter, my lord, and can boast as strong a resolution as yourself. I'll die before I'll marry Guzman.

*Lop.* Say you so? I'll try that presently. [*Draws.*] Here, let me see with what dexterity you can breathe a vein now. [*Offers her his sword.*] The point is pretty sharp—'twill do your business, I warrant you.

*Inis.* Bless me, sir! What, do you mean to put a sword into the hands of a desperate woman?



*Lop.* Desperate! ha, ha, ha! you see how desperate she is. What, art thou frightened, little Bell? ha!

*Isab.* I confess I am startled at your morals, sir.

*Lop.* Ay, ay, child, thou hadst better take the man; he'll hurt thee the least of the two.

*Isab.* I shall take neither, sir: Death has many doors; and when I can live no longer with pleasure, I shall find one to let him in at without your aid.

*Lop.* Say'st thou so, my dear Bell? Ods, I'm afraid thou art a little lunatic, Bell. I must take care of thee, child. [*Takes hold of her, and pulls out of his pocket a key.*] I shall make bold to secure thee, my dear; I'll see if locks and bars can keep thee till Guzman come. Go, get into your chamber:

*There I'll your boasted resolution try,*

*And see who'll get the better, you or I.*

[*Pushes her in, and locks the door.*]

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*ACT II. SCENE I.*

*A Room in Don PEDRO's House. Enter Donna VIO-  
LANTE reading a Letter, and FLORA following.*

*Flora.*

**W**HAT, must that letter be read again?

*Vio.* Yes, and again, and again, and again, a thousand times again; a letter from a faithful lover can ne'er be read too often; it speaks such kind, such soft, such tender things—— [*Kisses it.*]

*Flo.* But always the same language.

*Vio.* It does not charm the less for that.

*Flo.* In my opinion, nothing charms that does not change: and any composition of the four-and-twenty letters, after the first essay, from the same hand, must be dull, except a bank-note or a bill of exchange.

*Vio.* Thy taste is my aversion.—[*Reads.*]—‘My all that’s charming, since life’s not life, exil’d from thee, this night shall bring me to thy arms. Frederick and thee are all I trust. These six weeks’ absence has been in love’s account six hundred years. When it is dark, expect the wonted signal at thy window: till when, adieu. Thine, more than his own,  
FELIX.’

*Flo.* Who would not have said as much to a lady of her beauty, and twenty thousand pounds?—Were I a man, methinks I could have said a hundred finer things.

*Vio.* *What would you have said?*

*Flo.* I would have compared your eyes to the stars, your teeth to ivory, your lips to coral, your neck to alabaster, your shape to——

*Vio.* No more of your bombast; truth is the best eloquence in a lover.—What proof remains ungiven of his love? When his father threatened to disinherit him for refusing Don Antonio’s sister, from whence sprung this unhappy quarrel, did it shake his love for me? and now, though strict inquiry runs through every place, with large rewards to apprehend him, does he not venture all for me?

*Flo.* But you know, madam, your father Don Pedro designs you for a nun—to be sure, you look ve-

*ry like a nun!*—and says your grandfather left you your fortune upon that condition.

*Vio.* Not without my approbation, girl, when I come to one-and-twenty, as I am informed. But, however, I shall run the risk of that. Go, call in Liffardo.

*Flo.* Yes, madam. Now for a thousand verbal questions. [*Exit, and re-enter with Liffardo.*]

*Vio.* Well, and how do you do, Liffardo?

*Liff.* Ah, very weary, madam.—'Faith, thou look'st wondrous pretty, Flora. [*Aside to Flora.*]

*Vio.* How came you?

*Liff.* En chevalier, madam, upon a hackney jade, which they told me formerly belonged to an English colonel; but I should have rather thought she had been bred a good Roman catholic all her lifetime—for she down'd on her knees to every stock and stone we came along by.—My chops water for a kifs, they do, Flora. [*Aside to Flora.*]

*Flo.* You'd make one believe you are wondrous fond now.

*Vio.* Where did you leave your master?

*Liff.* Od, if I had you alone, housewife, I'd shew you how fond I could be— [*Aside to Flora.*]

*Vio.* Where did you leave your master?

*Liff.* At a little farm-house, madam, about five miles off. He'll be at Don Frederick's in the evening—Od, I will so revenge myself of those lips of thine. [*To Flora.*]

*Vio.* Is he in health?

*Flo.* Oh, you counterfeit wondrous well.

[*To Liffardo.*]

*Liff.* No; every body knows I counterfeit very ill.

[*To Flora.*

*Vio.* How say you? Is Felix ill? What's his disposition? ha!

*Liff.* A pies on't, I hate to be interrupted.—Love, madam, love—In short, madam, I believe he has thought of nothing but your ladyship ever since he left Lisbon. I am sure he could not, if I may judge of his heart by my own.

[*Looking lovingly upon Flora.*

*Vio.* How came you so well acquainted with your master's thoughts, Liffardo?

*Liff.* By an infallible rule, madam; words are the pictures of the mind, you know: now, to prove he thinks of nothing but you, he talks of nothing but you.—For example, madam, coming from shooting t'other day with a brace of partridges, Liffardo, said he, go bid the cook roast me these Violantes.—I flew into the kitchen full of thoughts of thee, cry'd, Here, cook, roast me these Floras.

[*To Flora.*

*Flo.* Ha, ha, excellent!—You mimic your master then, it seems.

*Liff.* I can do every thing as well as my master, you little rogue.—Another time, madam, the priest came to make him a visit, he called out hastily, Liffardo, said he, bring a Violante for my father to sit down on.—Then he often mistook my name, madam, and called me Violante: in short, I heard it so often, that it became as familiar to me as my prayers.

*Vio.* You live very merrily then, it seems.

*Liff.* Oh! exceeding merry, madam.

[*Kisses Flora's hand.*]

*Vio.* Ha! exceeding merry: had you treats and balls?

*Liff.* Oh! yes, yes, madam, several.

*Flo.* You are mad, Liffardo, you don't mind what my lady says to you. [*Aside to Liffardo.*]

*Vio.* Ha! balls—Is he so merry in my absence? And did your master dance, Liffardo?

*Liff.* Dance, madam! where, madam?

*Vio.* Why, at those balls you speak of.

*Liff.* Balls! what balls, madam?

*Vio.* Why, sure you are in love, Liffardo; did not you say, but now, you had balls where you have been?

*Liff.* Balls, madam! Odsife, I ask your pardon, madam! I, I, I, had mislaid some wash-balls of my master's t'other day; and because I could not think where I had laid them, just when he ask'd for them, he very fairly broke my head, madam; and now, it seems, I can think of nothing else. Alas! he dance, madam! No, no, poor gentleman! he is as melancholy as an unbraced drum.

*Vio.* Poor Felix! There, wear that ring for your master's sake, and let him know I shall be ready to receive him. [*Exit Violante.*]

*Liff.* I shall, madam.—[*Puts on the ring.*] Methinks a diamond ring is a vast addition to the little finger of a gentleman. [*Admiring his hand.*]

*Flo.* That ring must be mine.—Well, Liffardo, what haste you make to pay off arrears now? Look how the fellow stands!



*Liss.* Egad, methinks I have a very pretty hand—and very white—and the shape!—Faith, I never minded it so much before—In my opinion it is a very fine shaped hand—and becomes a diamond ring as well as the first grandee's in Portugal.

*Flo.* The man's transported! Is this your love, this your impatience?

*Liss.* [*Takes snuff.*] Now in my mind—I take snuff with a very jantee air—Well, I am persuaded I want nothing but a coach and a title to make me a very fine gentleman. [*Struts about.*]

*Flo.* Sweet Mr. Lissardo! [*Curtfying.*] if I may presume to speak to you without affronting your little finger—

*Liss.* Odso, madam, I ask your pardon—Is it to me, or to the ring—you direct your discourse, madam?

*Flo.* Madam! good lack! how much a diamond ring improves one!

*Liss.* Why, tho' I say it—I can carry myself as well as any body—But what wert thou going to say, child?

*Flo.* Why, I was going to say that I fancy you had best let me keep that ring: it will be a very pretty wedding-ring, Lissardo, would it not?

*Liss.* Humph! ah! But—but—but—I believe I sha'n't marry yet awhile.

*Flo.* You sha'n't, you say—Very well! I suppose you design that ring for Inis.

*Liss.* No, no; I never bribe an old acquaintance—Perhaps I might let it sparkle in the eyes of a stranger a little till we come to a right understand-

ing—but then; like all other mortal things, it would return from whence it came.

*Flo.* Insolent!—Is that your manner of dealing?

*Liss.* With all but thee—Kiss me, you little rogue, you. *[Hugging her.]*

*Flo.* Little rogue! Pr'ythee, fellow, don't be so familiar; *[Pushing him away.]* if I mayn't keep your ring, I can keep my kisses.

*Liss.* You can, you say! Spoke with the air of a chambermaid.

*Flo.* Replied with the spirit of a serving man.

*Liss.* Pr'ythee, Flora, don't let you and I fall out; I am in a merry humour, and shall certainly fall in somewhere.

*Flo.* What care I where you fall in.

*Enter VIOLANTE.*

*Vio.* Why do you keep Lissardo so long, Flora, when you don't know how soon my father may awake? his afternoon naps are never long.

*Flo.* Had Don Felix been with her, she would not have thought the time long. These ladies consider nobody's wants but their own. *Aside.*

*Vio.* Go, go, let him out, and bring a candle.

*Flo.* Yes, madam.

*Liss.* I fly, madam. *[Exeunt Liss. and Flora.]*

*Vio.* The day draws in, and night, the lover's friend, advances—night more welcome than the sun to me, because it brings my love.

*Flo.* *[Shrieks within.]* Ah, thieves, thieves! Murder, murder!

*Vio.* [*Shrieks.*] Ah! defend me, Heaven! What do I hear? Felix is certainly pursu'd, and will be taken.

*Enter FLORA, running.*

*Vio.* How now? why dost stare so? Answer me quickly; what's the matter?

*Flo.* Oh, madam! as I was letting out Lissardo, a gentleman rushed between him and I, struck down my candle, and is bringing a dead person in his arms into our house.

*Vio.* Ha! a dead person! Heav'n grant it does not prove my Felix.

*Flo.* Here they are, madam.

*Vio.* I'll retire till you discover the meaning of this accident. [*Exit.*]

*Enter Colonel, with ISABELLA in his arms, sets her down in a chair, and addresses himself to FLORA.*

*Col.* Madam, the necessity this lady was under of being conveyed into some house with speed and secrecy, will, I hope, excuse my indecency I might be guilty of in pressing so rudely into this—I am an entire stranger to her name and circumstances—would I were so to her beauty too. [*Aside.*] I commit her, madam, to your care, and fly to make her retreat secure if the street be clear: permit me to return, and learn from her own mouth if I can be further serviceable. Pray, madam, how is the lady of this house called?

*Flo.* Violante, signior—"He is a handsome cavalier, and promises well. [*Aside.*]

*Col.* Are you she, madam?

*Flo.* Only her woman, signior."

*Col.* Your humble servant, mistress. Pray be careful of the lady.—

[*Gives her two moidores, and exit.*]

*Flo.* Two moidores! Well, he is a generous fellow. This is the only way to make one careful. "I find all countries understand the constitution of a chambermaid."

*Enter VIOLANTE.*

*Vio.* Was you distracted, Flora; to tell my name to a man you never saw! Unthinking wench! who knows what this may turn to?—What, is the lady dead? Ah! defend me Heaven! 'tis Isabella, sister to my Felix. What has befallen her? Pray Heaven he's safe.—Run and fetch some cold water.—Stay, stay, Flora.—Isabella, friend, speak to me; Oh! speak to me, or I shall die with apprehension.

*Flo.* See, she revives."

*Isab.* Oh! hold, my dearest father; do not force me, indeed I cannot love him.

*Vio.* How wild she talks!—

*Isab.* Ha! where am I?

*Vio.* With one as sensible of thy pain as thou thyself canst be.

*Isab.* Violante! what kind star preserved and lodged me here?

*Flo.* It was a terrestrial star called a man, madam; pray Jupiter he proves a lucky one.

*Ifab.* Oh! I remember now. Forgive me, dear Violante! my thoughts ran so much upon the danger I escap'd I forgot.

*Vio.* May I not know your story?

*Ifab.* Thou art no stranger to one part of it. I have often told thee that my father design'd to sacrifice me to Don Guzman, who, it seems, is just return'd from Holland, and expected ashore to-morrow, the day that he has set to celebrate our nuptials. Upon my refusing to obey him, he lock'd me into my chamber, vowing to keep me there till he arriv'd, and force me to consent. I know my father to be positive, never to be won from his design; and having no hope left me to escape the marriage, I leap'd from the window into the street.

*Vio.* You have not hurt yourself, I hope?

*Ifab.* No; a gentleman passing by by accident, caught me in his arms: at first, my fright made me apprehend it was my father, till he assured me to the contrary.

*Flo.* He is a very fine gentleman, I promise you, madam, and a well-bred man I warrant him. I think I never saw a grandee put his hand into his pocket with a better air in my whole life-time; then he open'd his purse with such a grace, that nothing but his manner of presenting me with the gold could equal.

*Vio.* "There is but one common road to the heart of a servant, and 'tis impossible for a generous person to mistake it."—Go, leave us, Flora.  
—But how came you hither, Isabella?



*Ifab.* I know not; I desired the stranger to convey me to the next monastery, but ere I reach'd the door I saw, or fancy'd that I saw, Lissardo, my brother's man, and the thought that his master might not be far off flung me into a swoon, which is all that I can remember.—Ha! what's here? [*Takes up a letter.*] 'For Colonel Briton, to be left at the post house in Lisbon.' This must be dropped by the stranger which brought me hither.

*Vio.* Thou art fallen into the hands of a soldier; take care he does not lay thee under contribution, girl.

*Ifab.* I find he is a gentleman, and if he is but unmarried, I could be content to follow him all the world over.—But I shall never see him more, I fear. [*Sighs and pauses.*]

*Vio.* What makes you sigh, Isabella?

*Ifab.* The fear of falling into my father's clutches again.

*Vio.* Can I be serviceable to you?

*Ifab.* Yes, if you conceal me two or three days.

*Vio.* You command my house and secrecy.

*Ifab.* I thank you, Violante. I wish you would oblige me with Mrs. Flora a while.

*Vio.* I'll send her to you.—I must watch if dad be still asleep, or here will be no room for Felix.

[*Exit.*]

*Ifab.* Well, I don't know what ails me; methinks I wish I could find this stranger out.

[*Enter FLORA.*]

*Fl.* Does your ladyship want me, madam?

*Ifab.* Ay, Mrs. Flora: I resolve to make you my confidant.

*Flo.* I shall endeavour to discharge my duty, madam.

*Ifab.* I doubt it not, and desire you to accept this as a token of my gratitude.

*Flo.* Oh, dear Seniors! I should have been your humble servant without a fee.

*Ifab.* I believe it—But to the purpose—Do you think, if you saw the gentleman which brought me hither you shou'd know him again?

*Flo.* From a thousand, madam; I have an excellent memory where an handsome man is concerned. When he went away, he said he would return again immediately. I admire he comes not.

*Ifab.* Here, did you say? You rejoice me—though I'll not see him if he comes. Could not you contrive to give him a letter?

*Flo.* With the air of a duenna—

*Ifab.* Not in this house—you must veil and follow him—He must not know it comes from me.

*Flo.* What, do you take me for a novice in love affairs? Though I have not practis'd the art since I have been in Donna Violante's service, yet I have not lost the theory of a chambermaid—Do you write the letter and leave the rest to me.—Here, here, here's pen, ink and paper.

*Ifab.* I'll do it in a minute. [*Sits down to write.*]

*Flo.* So! this is a business after my own heart.—Love always takes care to reward his labourers, and Great Britain seems to be his favourite country.—Oh! I long to see the other two moidores with

a British air—Methinks there's a grace peculiar to that nation in making a present.

*Ifab.* So, I have done. Now, if he does but find this house again!

*Flo.* If he should not—I warrant I'll find him, if he's in Lisbon; for I have a strong possession that he has two moidores as good as ever was told.

[*Puts the letter into her bosom.*]

*Enter VIOLANTE.*

*Vio.* Flora, watch my papa; he's fast asleep in his study: if you find him stir give me notice. [*Colonel taps at the window.*] Hark, I hear Felix at the window; admit him instantly, and then to your post. [*Exit Flora.*]

*Ifab.* What say you, Violante? is my brother come?

*Vio.* It is his signal at the window.

*Ifab.* [*Kneels.*] Oh, Violante! I conjure you by all the love thou bear'st to Felix, by thy own generous nature, nay more, by that unspotted virtue thou art mistress of, do not discover to my brother I am here.

*Vio.* Contrary to your desire be assur'd I never shall. But where's the danger?

*Ifab.* Art thou born in Lisbon and ask that question? He'll think his honour blemish'd by my disobedience, and would restore me to my father, or kill me; therefore, dear, dear girl—

*Vio.* Depend upon my friendship; nothing shall draw the secret from these lips, not even Felix, tho' at the hazard of his love. I hear him coming; retire into that closet.

*Ifab.* Remember, Violante, upon thy promise  
my very life depends. [Exit.]

*Vio.* When I betray thee may I share thy fate.

*Enter FELIX.*

*My Felix, my everlasting love!* [*Runs into his arms.*]

*Fel.* My life! my soul! my Violante!

*Vio.* What hazards dost thou run for me? Oh,  
how shall I requite thee?

*Fel.* If during this tedious painful exile thy  
thoughts have never wander'd from thy Felix, thou  
hast made me more than satisfaction.

*Vio.* Can there be room within this heart for  
any but thyself? No; if the god of love were lost  
to all the rest of human-kind, thy image would se-  
cure him in my breast: I am all truth, all love, all  
faith, and know no jealous fears.

*Fel.* My heart's the proper sphere where love re-  
sides: could he quit that he would be no where  
found; and yet Violante I'm in doubt.

*Vio.* Did I ever give thee cause to doubt, my Fe-  
lix?

*Fel.* True love has many fears, and Fear as many  
eyes as Fame, yet sure I think they see no fault in  
thee. [*Colonel taps again.*] What's that?

[*Taps again.*]

*Vio.* What! I heard nothing. [*Again.*]

*Fel.* Ha! what means this signal at your win-  
dow?

*Vio.* Somewhat perhaps in passing by might ac-  
cidentally hit it; it can be nothing else.

*Col.* [*Within.*] Hift, hift, Donna Violante, Donna Violante!

*Fel.* They use your name by accident too, do they, madam?

*Enter FLORA.*

*Flo.* There is a gentleman at the window, madam, which I fancy to be him who brought Isabella hither. Shall I admit him? [*Aside to Violante.*

*Vio.* Admit distraction rather! Thou art the cause of this, unthinking wretch. [*Aside to Flora.*

*Fel.* What, has Mr. Scout brought you fresh intelligence? Death! I'll know the bottom of this immediately. [*Offers to go.*

*Flo.* Scout! I scorn your words, senior.

*Vio.* Nay, nay, nay, you must not leave me.

[*Runs and catches hold of him.*

*Fel.* Oh! 'tis not fair to answer the gentleman, madam; it is none of his fault that his visit proves unseasonable. Pray let me go, my presence is but a restraint upon you.

[*Struggles to get from her. The Col. pats again.*

*Vio.* Was ever accident so mischievous! [*Aside.*

*Flo.* It must be the colonel—Now to deliver my letter to him. [*Exit. The Col. taps louder.*

*Fel.* Hark! he grows impatient at your delay.—Why do you hold the man whose absence would oblige you? Pray, let me go, madam. Consider the gentleman wants you at the window. Confusion!

[*Struggles still.*

*Vio.* It is not me he wants.



*Fel.* Death! not you! Is there another of your name in the house? But come on, convince me of the truth of what you say; open the window, if his business does not lie with you your conversation may be heard. This, and only this, can take off my suspicion.—What, do you pause? Oh, guilt, guilt!—Have I caught you? Nay, then I'll leap the balcony. If I remember, this way leads to it.

*[Breaks from her, and goes to the door where Isabella is.]*

*Vio.* "Oh, Heaven! what shall I do now!" Hold, hold, hold, hold; not for the world—you enter there. Which way shall I preserve his sister from his knowledge? *[Aside.]*

*Fel.* What, have I touch'd you? Do you fear your lover's life?

*Vio.* I fear for none but you.—For goodness' sake do not speak so loud, my Felix. If my father hear you, I am lost for ever; that door opens into his apartment. What shall I do if he enters? There he finds his sister——If he goes out he'll quarrel with the stranger.—Felix, Felix!——"Nay, "do not struggle to be gone, my Felix.—If I "open the window he may discover the whole intrigue, and yet of all evils we ought to chuse the "least"——Your curiosity shall be satisfied. *[Goes to the window, and throws up the sash.]* Whoe'er you are that with such insolence dare use my name, and give the neighbourhood pretence to reflect upon my conduct, I charge you instantly to be gone, or expect the treatment you deserve.

*Col.* I ask pardon, madam, and will obey: but when I left this house to-night——

*Fel.* Good!

*Vio.* It is most certainly the stranger. What will be the event of this Heaven knows. [*Aside.*] You are mistaken in the house, I suppose, sir.

*Fel.* No, no, he's not mistaken.——Pray, madam, let the gentleman go on.

*Vio.* “Wretched misfortune!” Pray, be gone, sir, I know of no business you have here.

*Col.* I wish I did not know it neither——But this house contains my soul, then can you blame my body for hovering about it?

*Fel.* Excellent!

*Vio.* “Distraction! he will infallibly discover ‘Isabella.’” I tell you again you are mistaken; however, for your own satisfaction, call to-morrow.

*Fel.* Matchless impudence! An assignation before my face!—No, he shall not live to meet your wishes.

[*Takes out a pistol and goes towards the window; she catches hold of him.*]

*Vio.* Ha! [*Shrieks.*] Hold, I conjure you.

*Col.* To-morrow's an age, madam! may I not be admitted to-night?

*Vio.* If you be a gentleman, I command your absence.——Unfortunate! what will my stars do with me? [*Aside.*]

*Col.* I have done——only this——be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.

*Exit from the window.*

*Fel.* Pray observe the gentleman's request, madam.  
[*Walking off from her.*

*Vio.* I am all confusion. [Aside.

*Fel.* You are all truth, all love, all faith! oh, thou all woman!—How have I been deceived? —'Sdeath, could you not have imposed upon me for this one night? Could neither my faithful love, nor the hazard I have run to see you, make me worthy to be cheated on. Oh, thou——

*Vio.* Can I bear this from you? [Weeps.

*Fel.* [Repeats.] When I left this house to-night —To-night! the devil! return so soon!

*Vio.* Oh, Isabella! what hast thou involv'd me in! [Aside.

*Fel.* [Repeats.] This house contains my soul.

*Vio.* Yet I resolve to keep the secret. [Aside.

*Fel.* [Repeats.] Be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.—Damnation!—How ugly she appears! [Looking at her.

*Vio.* Do not look so sternly on me, but believe me, Felix, I have not injur'd you, nor am I false.

*Fel.* Not false, not injur'd me! Oh, Violante, lost and abandoned to thy vice! Not false! Oh, monstrous!

*Vio.* Indeed I am not.—There is a cause which I must not reveal.—Oh, think how far honour can oblige your sex—then allow a woman may be bound by the same rule to keep a secret.

*Fel.* Honour! what hast thou to do with honour, thou that canst admit a plurality of lovers? A secret! ha, ha, ha! his affairs are wondrous safe who trusts his secret to a woman's keeping. But you

need give yourself no trouble about clearing this point, madam, for you are become so indifferent to me, that your truth and falsehood are the same.

*Vio.* My love! [*Offers to take his hand.*]

*Fel.* My torment!" [*Turns from her.*]

*Flo.* "So I have delivered my letter to the colonel  
"and received my fee. [*Aside.*]" Madam, your father bade me see what noise that was.—For goodness sake, sir, why do you speak so loud?

*Fel.* I understand my cue, mistress; my absence is necessary; I'll oblige you.

[*Going, she takes hold of him.*]

*Vio.* Oh, let me undeceive you first!

*Fel.* Impossible!

*Vio.* 'Tis very possible, if I durst.

*Fel.* Durst! ha, ha, ha! Durst, quotha!

*Vio.* But another time I'll tell thee all.

*Fel.* Nay, now or never——

*Vio.* Now it cannot be.

*Fel.* Then it shall never be—Thou most ungrateful of thy sex, farewell.

[*Breaks from her, and exit.*]

*Vio.* Oh, exquisite trial of my friendship! Yet, not even this shall draw the secret from me.

*That I'll preserve, let fortune frown or smile,  
And trust to Love my love to reconcile.* [*Exit.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

*A Chamber in Don LOPEZ's House. Enter DON LOPEZ.*

*Don Lopez.*

WAS ever man thus plagu'd? Odsheart, I could swallow my dagger for madness. I know not what to think: Sure Frederick had no hand in her escape. — She must get out of the window, and she could not do that without a ladder, and who could bring it to her but him? Ay, it must be so. “The dislike he shew'd to Don Guzman, in our discourse to-day, confirms my suspicion, and I will charge him home with it. Sure children were given me for a curse! Why, what innumerable misfortunes attend us parents! when we have employed our whole care to educate and bring our children up to years of maturity, just when we expect to reap the fruits of our labour, a man shall, in the twinkling of a bell, see one hang'd and t'other whor'd.” This graceless baggage! — But I'll to Frederick immediately; I'll take the Alguazil with me and search his house, and if I find her, I'll use her — by St. Anthony I don't know how I'll use her. *[Exit.]*



SCENE II.

*Changes to the Street. Enter Colonel with ISABELLA's Letter in his hand, and GIBBY following.*

Col. Well, though I could not see my fair incognita, Fortune, to make me amends, has flung another intrigue in my way. Oh! how I love these pretty kind coming females that won't give a man the trouble of racking his invention to deceive them. —“Oh, Portugal! thou dear garden of pleasure—where love drops down his mellow fruit, and every bough bends to our hands, and seems to cry, come pull, and eat: how deliciously a man lives here without fear of the stool of repentance!” —This letter I received from a lady in a veil—some duenna, some necessary implement of Cupid. I suppose the style is frank and easy, I hope like her that writ it. [*Reads.*] ‘Sir, I have seen your person and like it,—very concise—‘and if you’ll meet at four o’clock in the morning, upon the *Terriero de passa*, half an hour’s conversation will let me into your mind.’—Ha, ha, ha! a philosophical wench! This is the first time I ever knew a woman had any business with the mind of a man.—‘If your intellects answer your outward appearance, the adventure may not displease you. I expect you’ll not attempt to see my face, nor offer any thing unbecoming the gentleman I take you for.’—Humph, the gentleman she takes me for! I hope she takes me to be flesh and blood, and then I’m sure I shall do nothing unbecoming a gentleman. Well, if I

must not see her face, it shall go hard if I don't know where she lives.—Gibby.

Gib. Here an lik yer honour.

Col. Follow me at a good distance, do you hear, Gibby.

Gib. In troth dee I, weel eneugh, fir.

Col. I am to meet a lady upon the *Terriero de passa*.

Gib. The deel an mine eyn gin I ken her, fir.

Col. But you will when you come there, firrah.

Gib. Like eneugh, fir; I have as sharp an eyn tull a bonny lass as ere a lad in aw Scotland. And what mun I dee wi' her, fir?

Col. Why, if she and I part you must watch her home, and bring me word where she lives.

Gib. In troth sal I, fir, gin the deel take her not.

Col. Come along then, it is pretty near the time.—I like a woman that rises early to pursue her inclination.

*Thus we improve the pleasures of the day,  
While tasteless mortals sleep their time away. [Exit.*

### SCENE III.

*Changes to FREDERICK'S House. Enter INIS and LISSARDO.*

Liss. Your lady run away, and you know not whither, say you?

Inis. She never greatly car'd for me after finding you and I together. But you are very grave me-thinks, Lissardo.

*Liss.* [*Looking on the ring.*] Not at all—I have some thoughts indeed of altering my course of living: there is a critical minute in every man's life, which if he can but lay hold of, he may make his fortune.

*Inis.* Ha! what do I see? A diamond ring! Where the deuce had he that ring? You have got a very pretty ring there, *Lissardo*.

*Liss.* Ay, the trifle is pretty enough—but the lady who gave it to me is a *bona roba* in beauty, I assure you. [*Cocks his hat and struts.*]

*Inis.* I can't bear this.—The lady! what lady, pray?

*Liss.* O fy! there's a question to ask a gentleman.

*Inis.* A gentleman! why the fellow's spoil'd! Is this your love for me? Ungrateful man! you'll break my heart, so you will. [*Bursts into tears.*]

*Liss.* Poor tender-hearted fool!

*Inis.* If I knew who gave you that ring, I'd tear her eyes out, so I wou'd. [*Sobs.*]

*Liss.* So, now the jade wants a little coaxing. Why, what dost weep for now, my dear? ha!

*Inis.* I suppose *Flora* gave you that ring; but I'll—

*Liss.* No, the devil take me if she did: you make me swear now.—So, they are all for the ring, but I shall bob 'em.—I did but joke; the ring is none of mine, it is my master's, I am to give it to be new set, that's all; therefore, pr'ythee, dry thy eyes, and kiss me; come.

*Enter FLORA.*

*Inis.* And do you really speak truth now?

*Liss.* Why, do you doubt it?

*Flo.* So, so, very well! I thought there was an intrigue between him and Inis, for all he has forsworn it so often. *[Aside.*

*Inis.* Nor ha'n't you seen Flora since you came to town?

*Flo.* Ha! how dares she name my name? *[Aside.*

*Liss.* No, by this kiss I ha'n't. *[Kisses her.*

*Flo.* Here's a dissembling varlet! *[Aside.*

*Inis.* Nor don't you love her at all?

*Liss.* Love the devil! Why, did I not always tell thee she was my aversion?

*Flo.* Did you so, villain?

*[Strikes him a box on the ear.*

*Liss.* Zounds, she here! I have made a fine spot of work on't. *[Aside.*

*Inis.* What's that for? ha! *[Brushes up to her.*

*Flo.* I shall tell you by and by, Mrs. Frippery, if you don't get about your business.

*Inis.* Who do you call Frippery, Mrs. Trollop? —Pray, get about your business, if you go to that. I hope you pretend to no right and title here.

*Liss.* What the devil! do they take me for an acre of land, that they quarrel about right and title to me? *[Aside.*

*Flo.* Pray, what right have you, mistress, to ask that question?

*Inis.* No matter for that; I can shew a better title to him than you, I believe.

*Flo.* What, has he given thee nine months earnest for a living title? ha, ha!

*Inis.* Don't fling your flaunting jests to me, Mrs. Boldface, for I won't take 'em, I assure you.

*Liff.* So! now I am as great as the fam'd Alexander. But my dear Statira and Roxana, don't exert yourselves so much about me. Now I fancy if you would agree lovingly together, I might, in a modest way, satisfy both your demands upon me.

*Flo.* You satisfy! No, firrah, I am not to be satisfied so soon as you think, perhaps.

*Inis.* No, nor I neither.—What! do you make no difference between us!

*Flo.* You pitiful fellow you! What! you fancy, I warrant, I gave myself the trouble of dogging you out of love to your filthy person; but you are mistaken firrah—it was to detect your treachery.—How often have you sworn to me that you hated *Inis*, and only carried fair for the good cheer she gave you, but that you could never like a woman with crooked legs you said?

*Inis.* How, how, firrah, crooked legs! Ods, I could find in my heart—

[*Snatching up her petticoats a little.*]

*Liff.* Here's a lying young jade now? Pr'ythee, my dear, moderate thy passion. [*Coaxingly.*]

*Inis.* I'd have you to know, firrah, my legs was never—Your master, I hope, understands legs better than you do, firrah. [*Passionately.*]

*Liff.* My master! so, so.

[*Shaking his head and winking.*]

*Flo.* I am glad I have done some mischief, however. [*Aside.*]



*Liff.* [*To Inis.*] Art thou really so foolish to mind what an enraged woman says! Don't you see she does it on purpose to part you and I? [*Runs to Flora.*] Could not you find the joke without putting yourself in a passion, you silly girl you! Why, I saw you follow us plain enough, mun, and said all this that you might not go back with only your labour for your pains.—But you are a revengeful young slut though, I tell you that; but come, kiss and be friends.

*Flo.* Don't think to coax me; hang your kisses.

*Fel.* [*Within.*] Liffardo!

*Liff.* Ods-heart, here's my master. The devil take both these jades for me; what shall I do with them?

*Inis.* Ha! 'tis Don Felix's voice; I would not have him find me here with his footman for the world. [*Aside.*

*Fel.* [*Within.*] Why, Liffardo, Liffardo!

*Liff.* Coming, sir. What a pox will you do?

*Flo.* Bless me, which way shall I get out?

*Liff.* Nay, nay, you must e'en set your quarrel aside, and be content to be mewed up in this clothes-press together, or stay where you are and face it out—there is no help for it.

*Flo.* Put me any where rather than that; come, come, let me in. [*He opens the press and she goes in.*

*Inis.* I'll see her hanged before I'll go into the place where she is.—I'll trust fortune with my deliverance.—Here us'd to be a pair of back stairs, I'll try to find them out. [*Exit.*

*Enter FELIX and FREDERICK.*

*Fel.* Was you asleep, firrah, that you did not hear me call?

*Liff.* I did hear you, and answer'd you I was coming, fir.

*Fel.* Go, get the horses ready; I'll leave Lisbon to-night, never to see it more.

*Liff.* Hey-day! what's the matter now? [*Exit.*]

*Fred.* Pray tell me, Don Felix, what has ruffled your temper thus?

*Fel.* A woman—Oh, friend! who can name woman, and forget inconstancy!

*Fred.* This from a person of mean education were excuseable; such low suspicions have their source from vulgar conversation; men of your politer taste never rashly censure.—Come, this is some groundless jealousy.—Love raises many fears.

*Fel.* No, no; my ears convey'd the truth into my heart, and reason justifies my anger. Oh, my friend! Violante's false, and I have nothing left but thee in Lisbon which can make me wish ever to see it more, except revenge upon my rival, of whom I'm ignorant. Oh, that some miracle wou'd reveal him to me, that I might, through his heart, punish her infidelity!

*Enter LISSARDO.*

*Liff.* Oh, fir! here's your father, Don Lopez, coming up.

*Fel.* Does he know that I am here?

*Liff.* I can't tell, fir, he ask'd for Don Frederick.

*Fred.* Did he see you?

*Liss.* I believe not, sir; for as soon as I saw him, I ran back to give my master notice.

*Fel.* Keep out of his sight then—and, dear Frederick, permit me to retire into the next room, for I know the old gentleman will be very much displeased at my return without his leave. *[Exit.]*

*Fred.* Quick, quick, begone, he is here.

*Enter Don LOPEZ, speaking as he enters.*

*Lop.* Mr. Alguazil, wait you without till I call for you. Frederick, an affair brings me here—which—requires privacy—so that if you have any body within ear-shot, pray order them to retire.

*Fred.* We are private, my lord, speak freely.

*Lop.* Why then, sir, I must tell you that you had better have pitch'd upon any man in Portugal to have injur'd than myself.

*"Fel. [Peeping.]* What means my father?"

*Fred.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Lop.* Tho' I am old I have a son—Alas! why name I him? he knows not the dishonour of my house.

*"Fel.* I am confounded! The dishonour of his house!"

*Fred.* Explain yourself, my lord, I am not conscious of any dishonourable action to any man, much less to your lordship.

*Lop.* 'Tis false; you have debauch'd my daughter.

*"Fel.* Debauch'd my sister! impossible! he could not, durst not, be that villain."

*Fred.* My lord, I scorn so foul a charge.

*Lop.* You have debauch'd her duty at least, therefore instantly restore her to me, or by St. Anthony I'll make you.

*Fred.* Restore her, my lord! where shall I find her?

*Lop.* I have those that will swear she is here in your house.

*Fel.* Ha! in this house!"

*Fred.* You are misinform'd, my lord! Upon my reputation I have not seen Donna Isabella since the absence of Don Felix.

*Lop.* Then pray, sir—if I am not too inquisitive, what motive had you for those objections you made against her marriage with Don Guzman yesterday?

*Fred.* The disagreeableness of such a match, I fear'd, would give your daughter cause to curse her duty if she comply'd with your demands; that was all, my lord.

*Lop.* And so you help'd her thro' the window, to make her disobey.

*Fel.* Ha, my sister gone! Oh, scandal to our blood!"

*Fred.* This is insulting me, my lord, when I assure you I have neither seen nor know any thing of your daughter.—If she is gone, the contrivance was her own, and you may thank your rigour for it.

*Lop.* Very well, sir; however, my rigour shall make bold to search your house. Here, call in the Alguazil——

*Flo.* [*Peeping.*] The Alguazil! What in the name of wonder will become of me?

*Fred.* The Alguazil! My lord, you'll repent this.

*Enter Alguazil, and attendants.*

*Lop.* No, fir, 'tis you that will repent it. I charge you in the king's name to assist me in finding my daughter.—Be sure you leave no part of the house unsearched. Come, follow me.

*[Gets towards the door where Felix is: Frederick draws, and plants himself before the door.]*

*Fred.* Sir, I must first know by what authority you pretend to search my house before you enter here.

*Alg.* How, fir, dare you presume to draw your sword upon the representative of majesty? I am, fir, I am his majesty's alguazil, and the very quintessence of authority—therefore put up your sword, or I shall order you to be knocked down—for know, fir, the breath of an alguazil is as dangerous as the breath of a demi-culverin.

*Lop.* She is certainly in that room, by his guarding the door.—If he disputes your authority, knock him down, I say.

*Fred.* I shall shew you some sport first. The woman you look for is not here; but there is something in this room which I'll preserve from your fight at the hazard of my life.

*Lop.* Enter, I say; nothing but my daughter can be there.—Force his sword from him.

*[Felix comes out, and joins Frederick.]*

*Fel.* Villains, stand off! assassinate a man in his own house!

*Lop.* Oh, oh, oh, misericordia! what do I see? my son!



*Alg.* Ha, his son! Here's five hundred pounds good, my brethren, if Antonio dies; and that's in the surgeon's power—and he's in love with my daughter, you know—so seize him.—“Don Felix, I command you to surrender yourself into the hands of justice, in order to raise me and my posterity; and in consideration you lost your head to gain me five hundred pounds, I'll have your generosity recorded on your tombstone—at my own proper cost and charge—I hate to be ungrateful.”

*Lop.* Hold, hold! Oh that ever I was born!

*Fred.* Did I not tell you you would repent, my lord? What, ho! within there.

*Enter Servants.*

Arm yourselves, and let not a man in nor out but Felix.

*Fel.* Generous Frederick!

*Fred.* Look ye, alguazil, when you would betray my friend for filthy lucre, I shall no more regard you as an officer of justice, but as a thief and robber thus resist you.

*Fel.* Come on, sir, we'll shew you play for the five hundred pounds.

“*Alg.* Fall on, seize the money, right or wrong, ye rogues.”

[*They fight.*]

*Lop.* Hold, hold, alguazil, I'll give you the five hundred pounds, that is, my bond to pay upon Antonio's death, and twenty pistoles, however things go, for you and these honest fellows to drink my health.

*Alg.* Say you so, my lord? Why, look ye, my lord, I bear the young gentleman no ill will, my lord. If I get but the five hundred pounds, my lord—why, look ye, my lord—'tis the same thing to me, whether your son be hanged or not, my lord.

*Fel.* Scoundrels!—

*Lop.* Ay, well, thou art a good-natured fellow, that's the truth on't.—Come then, we'll to the tavern, and sign and seal this minute. Oh, Felix! *why wouldst thou serve me thus?—But I cannot upbraid thee now, nor have I time to talk.* Be careful of thyself, or thou wilt break my heart.

[*Exeunt Lopez, Alguazil, and Attendants.*]

*Fel.* Now, Frederick, though I ought to thank you for your care of me, yet till I am satisfied as to my father's accusation, *for I overheard it all*, I can't return the acknowledgments I owe to you. Know you ought relating to my sister?

*Fred.* I hope my faith and truth are known to you—and here by both I swear, I am ignorant of every thing relating to your father's charge.

*Fel.* Enough, I do believe thee. Oh Fortune! where will thy malice end?

*Enter VASQUEZ.*

*Vasq.* Sir, I bring you joyful news.

*Fel.* *What's the matter?*

*Vasq.* I am told that Don Antonio is out of danger, and now in the palace.

*Fel.* I wish it be true; then I'm at liberty to watch my rival, and pursue my sister. Pr'ythee,

Frederick, inform thyself of the truth of this report.

*Fred.* I will, this minute.—Do you hear, let nobody in to Don Felix till my return. [Exit.

*Vasq.* I'll observe, sir. [Exit.

*Flo.* [Peeping.] They have almost frightened me out of my wits, I'm sure.—Now Felix is alone, I have a good mind to pretend I came with a message from my lady; but how then shall I say I came in to the cupboard?

*Enter VASQUEZ, seeming to oppose the entrance of somebody.*

*Vasq.* I tell you, madam, Don Felix is not here.

*Vio.* [Within.] I tell you, sir, he is here, and I will see him.

*Fel.* What noise is that?

*Vio.* [Breaking in.] You are as difficult of access, sir, as a first minister of state.

*Flo.* My stars, my lady here! [Shuts the press close.

*Fel.* If your visit was designed to Frederick, madam, he is abroad.

*Vio.* No, sir, the visit is to you.

*Fel.* You are very punctual in your ceremonies, madam.

*Vio.* Though I did not come to return your visit, but to take that which your civility ought to have brought me.

*Fel.* If my eyes, my ears, and my understanding ly'd, then I am in your debt; else not, madam.

*Vio.* I will not charge them with a term so gross, to say they ly'd; but call it a mistake, nay, call

it any thing to excuse my Felix.—Could I, think ye, could I put off my pride so far, poorly to dissemble a passion which I did not feel, or seek a reconciliation with what I did not love?—"Do but consider, if I had entertained another, should not I rather embrace this quarrel, pleased with the occasion that rid me of your visits, and gave me freedom to enjoy the choice which you think I have made? Have I any interest in thee but my love? or am I bound by aught but inclination to submit and follow thee?"——No law, whilst single, binds us to obey—but your sex are, "by nature and education," obliged to pay a deference to all womankind.

*Fel.* These are fruitless arguments. 'Tis most certain thou wert dearer to these eyes than all that Heaven e'er gave to charm the sense of man; but I would rather tear them out than suffer them to delude my reason and enslave my peace.

*Vio.* Can you love without esteem; and where is the esteem for her you still suspect? Oh, Felix, there is a delicacy in love, which equals even a religious faith! True love never doubts the object it adores, and sceptics there will disbelieve their sight.

*Fel.* Your notions are too refined for mine, madam.

*Enter VASQUEZ.*

How now, firrah, what do you want?

*Vasq.* Only my master's cloak out of this press, fir, that's all.

*Fel.* Make haste, then.

*Vasq.* [*Opens the press, sees Flora, and roars out.*]  
—Oh, the devil, the devil! [*Exit.*]

*Flo.* Discovered!—nay, then legs befriend me.  
[*Runs out.*]

*Vio.* Ha! a woman concealed! very well, Felix.

*Fel.* A woman in the press!

*Enter LISSARDO.*

How the devil came a woman there, sirrah?

*Liss.* What shall I say now?

*Vio.* Now, Lissardo, shew your wit to bring your master off.

*Liss.* Off, madam—Nay, nay, nay, there, there needs no great wit to, to, to, bring him off, madam; for she did, and she did not come, as, as, as, a, a, a, man may say directly to, to, to, to, to speak with my master, madam.

*Vio.* I see by your stammering, Lissardo, that your invention is at a very low ebb.

*Fel.* 'Sdeath! rascal, speak without hesitation, and the truth too, or I shall stick my spado in your guts.

*Vio.* No, no, your master mistakes; he would not have you speak the truth.

*Fel.* Madam, my sincerity wants no excuse.

*Liss.* I am so confounded between the one and the other, that I can't think of a lie. [*Aside.*]

*Fel.* Sirrah, fetch me this woman back instantly—I'll know what business she has here.

*Vio.* Not a step; your master shall not be put to the blush.—Come, a truce, Felix. Do you ask me no more questions about the window, and I'll forgive this.



*Fel.* I scorn forgiveness where I own no crime;—but your soul, conscious of its guilt, would fain lay hold of this occasion, to blend your treason with my innocence.

*Vio.* Insolent!—Nay, if instead of owning your fault, you endeavour to insult my patience, I must tell you, sir, you don't behave yourself like that man of honour you would be taken for; you ground your quarrel with me upon your own inconstancy; 'tis plain you are false yourself, and would make me the aggressor.—It was not for nothing the fellow opposed my entrance.—This last usage has given me back my liberty, and now my father's will shall be obeyed without the least reluctance; and so your servant. *[Exit.]*

*Fel.* Oh, stubborn, stubborn heart, what wilt thou do?—Her father's will shall be obeyed!—Ha! that carries her to a cloister, and cuts off all my hopes at once.—By Heaven, she shall not, must not leave me.—No, she is not false—at least my love now represents her true,—because I fear to lose her.—Ha! villain, art thou here?—*[Turns upon Lissardo.]*—Tell me this moment who this woman was, and for what intent she was here concealed—or—

*Liss.* Ay, good sir! forgive me, and I'll tell you the whole truth. *[Falls on his knees.]*

*Fel.* Out with it, then—

*Liss.* It, it, it was Mrs. Flora, sir, Donna Violante's woman. You must know, sir, we have had a sneaking-kindness for one another a great while—she was not willing you should know it; so

when she heard your voice, she ran into the clothes-press. I would have told you this at first, but I was afraid of her lady's knowing it. This is the truth, as I hope for a whole skin, sir.

*Fel.* If it be not, I'll not leave you a whole bone in it, sirrah.—Fly, and observe if Violante goes directly home.

*Liss.* Yes, sir, yes.

*Fel.* Fly, you dog, fly.—[Exit *Lissardo*.]—I must convince her of my faith. Oh, how irresolute is a lover's heart!—"My resentment cooled when hers grew high—nor can I struggle longer with my fate; I cannot quit her, no, I cannot, so absolute a conquest has she gained."—How absolute a woman's power!

*In vain we strive their tyranny to quit,*

*In vain we struggle, for we must submit.* [Exit

#### SCENE IV.

*The Terriero de Passa. Enter Colonel, and Isabella veiled. GIBBY at a distance.*

*Col.* Then you say it is impossible for me to wait on you home, madam?

*Isab.* I say it is inconsistent with my circumstances, colonel—and that way impossible for me to admit of it.

*Col.* Consent to go with me, then.—I lodge at one Don Frederick's, a merchant, just by here.—He is a very honest fellow, and I dare confide in his secrecy.

*Isab.* Ha! does he lodge there?—Pray Heaven I am not discovered. [Aside.]

*Col.* What say you, my charmer?—shall we breakfast together? I have some of the best tea in the universe.

*Isab.* Puh! tea! is that the best treat you can give a lady at your lodgings, colonel?

*Col.* Well hinted—No, no, no, I have other things at thy service, child.

*Isab.* What are those things, pray?

*Col.* My heart, soul, and body, into the bargain.

*Isab.* Has the last no encumbrance upon it? Can you make a clear title, colonel?

*Col.* All freehold, child, and I'll afford thee a very good bargain. [Embraces her.]

*Gib.* O' my sal they mak muckle words about it. —Ise fare weary with standing—Ise e'en tak a sleep. [Lies down.]

*Isab.* If I take a lease it must be for life, colonel.

*Col.* Thou shalt have me as long or as little time as thou wilt, my dear. Come, let's to my lodgings, and we'll sign and seal this minute.

*Isab.* Oh, not so fast, colonel—There are many things to be adjusted before the lawyer and the parson comes.

*Col.* The lawyer and parson!—No, no, you little rogue, we can finish our affairs without the help of the law—or the gospel.

*Isab.* Indeed but we cann't, colonel.

*Col.* Indeed!—Why, hast thou then trepanned me out of my warm bed this morning for nothing? Why this is shewing a man half famished a well-

furnished larder, then clapping a padlock on the door till you starve him quite.

*Isab.* If you can find in your heart to say grace, colonel, you shall keep the key.

*Col.* I love to see my meat before I give thanks, madam; therefore uncover thy face, child, and I'll tell thee more of my mind——If I like you——

*Isab.* I dare not risk my reputation upon your *ifs*, colonel, and so adieu. [*Going.*]

*Col.* Nay, nay, nay, we must not part.

*Isab.* As you ever hope to see me more, suspend your curiosity now; one step farther loses me for ever.—Shew yourself a man of honour, and you shall find me a woman of honour. [*Exit.*]

*Col.* Well, for once I'll trust to a blind bargain, madam—[*Kisses her hand, and parts.*] But I shall be too cunning for your ladyship, if Gibby observes my orders. Methinks, these intrigues which relate to the mind are very insipid.—The conversation of bodies is much more diverting.—Ha! what do I see? my rascal asleep! Sirrah, did not I charge you to watch the lady? and is it thus you observe my orders, ye dog?

[*Kicks him all this while, and he shrugs, and rubs his eyes, and yawns.*]

*Gib.* That's true, an like yer honour; but I thought that when yence ye had her in yer ane hands ye might a' ordered her yer sel weel enough without me, en ye ken, an like yer honour.

*Col.* Sirrah, hold your impertinent tongue, and make haste after her. If you don't bring me some account of her, never dare to see my face again.

*Gib.* Ay, this is bony wank indeed! to run three hundred mile to this wicked town, and before I can weel fill my weam to be sent a whore-hunting after this black she devil.—What gate sal I gang to speer for this wutch now? Ah for a ruling elder—or the kirk's treasurer—or his mon—I'd gar my maister mak twa o' this——But I am sure there's na sick honest people here, or there wud na be sa mickle sculdudrie.

*Enter an English Soldier passing along.*

*Gib.* Geud mon, did you see a woman, a lady, ony gate hereawa e'en now?

*Englishman.* Yes, a great many. What kind of a woman is it you inquire after?

*Gib.* Geud troth, she's na kenspeckle, she's aw in a cloud——

*Englishman.* What! 'tis some Highland monster which you brought over with you, I suppose: I see no fuch, nor I. Kenspeckle, quotha!

*Gib.* Huly, huly, mon; the deel pike out yer een, and then ye'll see the better, ye Portigise tike.

*Englishman.* What says the felioo?

*[Turning to Gibby.]*

*Gib.* Say! I say I am a bater fellow than e'er stude upon yer thanks——and gin I heer mair o' yer din, deel o' my faul, fir, but ise crack yer croon.

*Englishman.* Get you gone, you Scotch rascal, and thank your heathen dialect, which I don't understand, that you ha'n't your bones broke.



Act III. A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET.

Gib. Ay! an ye dinna understand a Scotsman's tongue, ise see gin ye can understand a Scotsman's gripe. Wha's the bater mon now, fir?

[Lays hold of him, strikes up his heels, and gets astride over him.]

Here VIOLANTE crosses the Stage, GIBBY jumps up from the Man, and brushes up to VIOLANTE.

Gib. I vow, madam, but I am glad that ye and I are foregather'd.

Vio. What would the fellow have?

Gib. Nothing; away, madam; wo worthy yer heart, what a muckle deal o' mischief had you like to bring upon poor Gibby!

Vio. The man's drunk——

Gib. In troth am I not——And gin I had na found ye, madam, the Laird knows when I should; for my maister bad me ne'er gang hame without tidings of ye, madam.

Vio. Sirrah! get about your business, or I'll have your bones drubb'd.

Gib. Geud faith, my maister has e'en done that t'yer honds, madam.

Vio. Who is your master, fir?

Gib. Mony a ane speers the gate they ken right weel: it is no fa lang sen ye parted wi' him. I wish he ken ye half as weel as ye ken him.

Vio. Pugh! the creature's mad, or mistakes me for somebody else; and I should be as mad as he to talk to him any longer. [Violante enters Don Pedro's house.]

*Gib.* Ay, this is bony wank indeed! to run three hundred mile to this wicked town, and before I can weel fill my weam to be sent a whore-hunting after this black she devil.—What gate sal I gang to speer for this wutch now? Ah for a ruling elder—or the kirk's treasurer—or his mon—I'd gar my master mak twa o' this——But I am sure there's na sick honest people here, or there wud na be sa mickle sculdudrie.

*Enter an English Soldier passing along.*

*Gib.* Geud mon, did you see a woman, a lady, ony gate hereawa e'en now?

*Englishman.* Yea, a great many. What kind of a woman is it you inquire after?

*Gib.* Geud troth, she's na kenspeckle, she's aw in a cloud——

*Englishman.* What! 'tis some Highland monster which you brought over with you, I suppose: I see no such, nor I. Kenspeckle, quotha!

*Gib.* Huly, huly, mon; the deel pike out yer een, and then ye'll see the better, ye Portugise like.

*Englishman.* What says the fellow?

[Turning to Gibby.]

*Gib.* Say! I say I am a bater fellow than e'er stude upon yer thanks——and gin I heer mair o' yer din, deel o' my faul, fir, but ise crack yer croon.

*Englishman.* Get you gone, you Scotch rascal, and thank your heathen dialect, which I don't understand, that you ha'n't your bones broke.

*Gib.* Ay! an ye dinna understand a Scottsman's tongue, he see gin ye can understand a Scottsman's gripe. Wha's the bater mon now, sir?

[*Lays hold of him, strikes up his heels, and gets astride over him.*]

*Here VIOLANTE crosses the Stage, GIBBY jumps up from the Man, and brushes up to VIOLANTE.*

*Gib.* I vow, madam, but I am glad that ye and I are foregather'd.

*Vio.* What would the fellow have?

*Gib.* Nothing; away, madam; wo worthy yer heart, what a muckle deal o' mischief had you like to bring upon poor Gibby!

*Vio.* The man's drunk——

*Gib.* In troth am I not——And gin I had na found ye, madam, the Laird knows when I should; for my maister bad me ne'er gang hame without tidings of ye, madam.

*Vio.* Sirrah! get about your business, or I'll have your bones drubb'd.

*Gib.* Geud faith, my maister has e'en done that t'yer honds, madam.

*Vio.* Who is your master, sir?

*Gib.* Mony a ane speers the gate they ken right weel: 'it is no sa lang sen ye parted wi' him. I wish he ken ye half as weel as ye ken him.

*Vio.* Pugh! the creature's mad, or mistakes me for somebody else; and I should be as mad as he to talk to him any longer. [*Violante enters Don Pedro's house.*]

*Enter LISSARDO at the upper end of the Stage.*

*Liff.* So, she's gone home, I see. What did that Scots fellow want with her? I'll try to find it out; perhaps I may discover something that may make my master friends with me again.

*Gib.* Are ye gone, madam? a deel scone in yer company, for I'm as weese as I was. But I'll bide and see wha's house it is, gin I can meet with ony civil body to speer at.—“Weel, of aw men in the warld I think our Scotsmen the greateft feuls to leave their weel-favour'd honest women at hame to rin walloping after a pack of gycarlings here, that shame to shew their faces, and peur men, like me, are forc'd to be their pimps. A pimp! Godswarbit, Gibby's ne'er be a pimp—and yet, in troth, it's a thriving trade; I remember a countrymon o' my ane, that by ganging o' sick like errants as I am now, came to get preferment.” My lad, wot ye wha lives here?

*[Turns and sees Liffardo.]*

*Liff.* Don Pedro de Mendosa.

*Gib.* And did you see a lady gang in but now?

*Liff.* Yes, I did.

*Gib.* And d'ye ken her tee?

*Liff.* It was Donna Violante, his daughter. What the devil makes him so inquisitive? Here is something in it, that is certain. *[Aside.]* 'Tis a cold morning, brother, what think you of a dram?

*Gib.* In troth, very weel, fir.

*Liff.* You seem an honest fellow; pr'ythee, let's drink to our better acquaintance.

*Gib.* Wi' aw my heart, fir; gang your gate to the next house, and Ise follow ye.

*Liff.* Come along then. [Exit.

*Gib.* Don Pedro de Mendosa!—Donna Violante, his daughter!—that's as reight as my leg now—Ise need na mare; I'll tak a drink, and then to my maister.—

*Ife bring him news will mak his heart full blee;  
Gin he rewards it not, deel pimp for me.* [Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*VIOLANTE's Lodgings. Enter ISABELLA in a gay temper, and VIOLANTE out of humour.*

*Isabella.*

My dear! I have been seeking you this half hour, to tell you the most lucky adventure.

*Vio.* And you have pitched upon the most unlucky hour for it that you could possibly have found in the whole four-and-twenty.

*Isab.* Hang unlucky hours! I won't think of them; I hope all my misfortunes are past.

*Vio.* And mine all to come.

*Isab.* I have seen the man I like.

*Vio.* And I have seen the man that I could wish to hate.

*Isab.* And you must assist me in discovering whether he can like me or not.

*Vio.* You have assisted me in such a discovery already, I thank ye.



*Ifab.* What say you, my dear?

*Vio.* I say I am very unlucky at discoveries, *Ifabella*; I have too lately made one pernicious to my ease; your brother is false.

*Ifab.* Impossible!

*Vio.* Most true.

*Ifab.* Some villain has traduc'd him to you.

*Vio.* No, *Ifabella*; I love too well to trust the eyes of others; I never credit the ill-judging world, or form suspicions upon vulgar censures; no, I had ocular proof of his ingratitude.

*Ifab.* Then I am most unhappy. My brother was the only pledge of faith betwixt us; if he has forfeited your favour, I have no title to your friendship.

*Vio.* You wrong my friendship, *Ifabella*; your own merit entitles you to every thing within my power.

*Ifab.* Generous maid!—But may I not know what grounds you have to think my brother false?

*Vio.* Another time.—But tell me, *Ifabella*, how can I serve you?

*Ifab.* Thus then—The gentleman that brought me hither I have seen and talk'd with upon the *Terriero de passa* this morning, and I find him a man of sense, generosity, and good humour; in short, he is every thing that I could like for a husband, and I have dispatch'd Mrs. Flora to bring him hither: I hope you'll forgive the liberty I have taken.

*Vio.* Hither! to what purpose?

*Ifab.* To the great universal purpose, matrimony.

*Vio.* Matrimony! why, do you design to ask him.

*Ifab.* No, Violante, you must do that for me.

*Vio.* I thank you for the favour you design me, but desire to be excus'd: I manage my own affairs too ill to be trusted with those of other people? "besides, if my father should find a stranger here, it might make him hurry me into a monastery immediately." I can't for my life admire your conduct, to encourage a person altogether unknown to you.—"I was very imprudent to meet him this morning, but much more so to send for him hither, knowing what inconveniency you have already drawn upon me.

*Ifab.* I am not insensible how far my misfortunes have embarrass'd you; and, if you please, sacrifice my quiet to your own.

*Vio.* Unkindly urg'd!—Have I not preferr'd your happiness to every thing that's dear to me?

*Ifab.* I know thou hast—then do not deny me this last request, when a few hours, perhaps, may render my condition able to clear thy fame, and bring my brother to thy feet for pardon.

*Vio.* I wish you don't repent of this intrigue. I suppose he knows you are the same woman that he brought in here last night.

*Ifab.* Not a syllable of that; I met him veiled, and to prevent his knowing the house, I ordered Mrs. Flora to bring him by the back-door into the garden.

*Vio.* The very way which Felix comes; if they should meet, there would be fine work.—Indeed, my dear, I can't approve of your design.

*Enter FLORA.*

*Flo.* Madam, the Colonel waits your pleasure.

*Vio.* How durst you go upon such a message, mistress, without acquainting me?

*Flo.* *So I am to be buff'd for every thing.*

*Isab.* 'Tis too late to dispute that now, dear Violante; I acknowledge the rashness of the action—but consider the necessity of my deliverance.

*Vio.* That indeed is a weighty consideration: well, what am I to do?

*Isab.* In the next room I'll give you instructions.—In the mean time, Mrs. Flora, shew the colonel into this.

*[Exit Flora one way, and Isabella and Violante another.]*

*Re-enter Flora with the Colonel.*

*Flo.* The lady will wait on you presently, sir.

*[Exit.]*

*Col.* Very well—This is a very fruitful soil. I have not been here quite four-and-twenty hours, and I have three intrigues upon my hands already; but I hate the chase without partaking of the game.—*[Enter Violante veil'd.]* Ha! a fine sized woman—pray Heaven she proves handsome—I am come to obey your ladyship's commands.

*Vio.* Are you sure of that, colonel?

*Col.* If you be not very unreasonable indeed, madam. A man is but a man.

*[Takes her hand and kisses it.]*

*Vio.* Nay, we have no time for compliments, colonel.

*Col.* I understand you, madam—*Montrez moi votre chambre.* [*Takes her in his arms.*]

*Vio.* Nay, nay, hold, colonel; my bed-chamber is not to be enter'd without a certain purchase.

*Col.* Purchase! humph, this is some kept mistress, I suppose, who industriously lets out her leisure hours. [*Aside.*] Look ye, madam, you must consider we soldiers are not overstock'd with money—but we make ample satisfaction in love; we have a world of courage upon our hands now, you know—then pr'ythee use a conscience, and I'll try if my pocket can come up to your price.

*Vio.* Nay, don't give yourself the trouble of drawing your purse, Colonel, my design is levell'd at your person, if that be at your own disposal.

*Col.* Ay, that it is faith, madam! and I'll settle it as firmly upon thee—

*Vio.* As law can do it.

*Col.* Hang law in love affairs; thou shalt have right and title to it out of pure inclination.—A matrimonial hint again. “Gad, I fancy the women “have a project on foot to transplant the union into “Portugal.” [*Aside.*]

*Vio.* Then you have an aversion to matrimony, colonel. Did you never see a woman in all your travels that you could like for a wife?

*Col.* A very odd question.—Do you really expect that I should speak truth now?

*Vio.* I do, if you expect to be dealt with, colonel.

*Col.* Why then——Yes.

*Vio.* Is she in your country, or this?

*Col.* This is a very pretty kind of a catechism:  
“but I don’t conceive which way it turns to edifi-  
“cation.” In this town, I believe, madam.

*Vio.* Her name is——

*Col.* Ay, how is she called, madam?

*Vio.* Nay, I ask you that, sir.

*Col.* Oh, ho, why she is called——Pray, ma-  
dam, how is it you spell your name?

*Vio.* Oh, colonel, I am not the happy woman,  
nor do I wish it.

*Col.* No! I’m sorry for that.——What the devil  
does she mean by all these questions? [*Afide.*]

*Vio.* Come, colonel, for once be sincere—per-  
haps you may not repent it.

*Col.* This is like to be but a silly adventure, here’s  
so much sincerity required. [*Afide.*] ‘Faith, ma-  
dam, I have an inclination to sincerity, but I’m  
afraid you’ll call my manners in question.

*Vio.* Not at all: I prefer truth before compli-  
ment in this affair.

*Col.* Why then, to be plain with you, madam, a  
lady last night wounded my heart by a fall from a  
window, whose person I could be content to take,  
as my father took my mother, till death do us part  
——but who she is, or how distinguished, whether  
maid, wife, or widow, I can’t inform you; per-  
haps you are she.

*Vio.* Not to keep you in suspense, I am not she  
——but I can give you an account of her. That lady  
is a maid of condition—has ten thousand pounds—



and, if you are a single man, her person and fortune are at your service.

Col. I accept the offer with the highest transports; but say, my charming angel! art thou not she? [*Offers to embrace her.*] "This is a lucky adventure." [*Aside.*]

Vio. Once again, colonel, I tell you I am not she—but at six this evening you shall find her on the *Terrero de passa* with a white handkerchief in her hand. Get a priest ready, and you know the rest.

Col. I shall infallibly observe your directions, madam.

*Enter FLORA hastily, and whispers VIOLANTE, who starts, and seems surprised.*

Vio. Ha! Felix crossing, say you? What shall I do now?

Col. You seem surprised, madam.

Vio. Oh colonel, my father is coming hither—and if he finds you here, I am ruined.

Col. Odslife, madam, thrust me any where. Can't I go out this way?

Vio. No, no, no, he comes that way. How shall I prevent their meeting? Here, here, step into my bed-chamber——

Col. Oh, the best place in the world, madam!

Vio. And be still, as you value her you love. Don't stir till you've notice, as ever you hope to have her in your arms.

Col. On that condition, I'll not breathe.

[*Exit Col.*]

*Enter FELIX.*

*Fel.* I wonder where this dog of a servant is all this while—But she is at home, I find—How coldly she regards me!—You look, Violante, as if the sight of me were troublesome to you.

*Vio.* Can I do otherwise, when you have the assurance to approach me after what I saw to-day?

*Fel.* Assurance! rather call it good-nature, after what I heard last night. But such regard to honour have I in my love to you, I cannot bear to be suspected, “nor suffer you to entertain false notions of my truth without endeavouring to convince you of my innocence;” so much good-nature have I more than you, Violante.—Pray give me leave to ask your woman one question; my man assures me she was the person you saw at my lodgings.

*Flo.* I confess it, madam, and ask your pardon.

*Vio.* Impudent baggage! not to undeceive me sooner: what business could you have there?

*Fel.* Lissardo and she, it seems, imitate you and I.

*Flo.* I love to follow the example of my betters, madam.

*Fel.* I hope I am justified—

*Vio.* Since we are to part, Felix, there needs no justification.

*Fel.* Methinks you talk of parting as a thing indifferent to you. Can you forget how I have loved?

*Vio.* I wish I could forget my own passion, I should with less concern remember yours.—But for mistress Floa—

*Fel.* You must forgive her——Must, did I say? I fear I have no power to impose, though the injury was done to me.

*Vio.* 'Tis harder to pardon an injury done to what we love, than to ourselves; but at your request, Felix, I do forgive her. Go watch my father, Flora, lest he should awake and surprise us.

*Flo.* Yes, madam.

[*Exit Flora.*]

*Fel.* Dost thou then love me, Violante?

*Vio.* What need of repetition from my tongue, when every look confesses what you ask?

*Fel.* Oh, let no man judge of love but those who feel it; what wondrous magic lies in one kind look! —One tender word destroys a lover's rage, and melts his fiercest passion into soft complaint. Oh, the window, Violante! wouldst thou but clear that one suspicion!

*Vio.* Pr'ythee, no more of that, my Felix; a little time shall bring thee perfect satisfaction.

*Fel.* Well, Violante, on condition you think no more of a monastery, I'll wait with patience for this mighty secret.

*Vio.* Ah, Felix, love generally gets the better of religion in us women. Resolutions made in the heat of passion ever dissolve upon reconciliation.

*Enter FLORA hastily.*

*Flo.* Oh madam, madam, madam! my lord your father has been in the garden, and locked the back-door, and comes muttering to himself this way.

*Vio.* Then we are caught. Now, Felix, we are undone.

*Fel.* Heavens forbid! This is most unlucky. Let me step into your bed-chamber, he won't look under the bed; there I may conceal myself.

*[Runs to the door, and pushes it open a little.]*

*Vio.* My stars! if he gets in there, he'll find the colonel.—No, no, Felix, that's no safe place: my father often goes thither, and should you cough or sneeze we are lost.

*Fel.* Either my eye deceived me, or I saw a man within; I'll watch him close.

*Flo.* Oh, invention, invention!—I have it, madam. Here, here, sir, off with your sword and I'll fetch you a disguise. *[Exit.]*

*Fel.* She shall deal with the devil if she conveys him out without my knowledge.

*Vio.* Bless me, how I tremble!

*Enter FLORA with a Riding-hood.*

*Flo.* Here, sir, put on this.

*Fel.* Ay, ay, any thing to avoid Don Pedro.

*[She puts it on.]*

*Vio.* Oh, quick, quick! I shall die with apprehension.

*Flo.* Be sure you don't speak a word.

*Fel.* Not for the Indies—but I shall observe you closer than you imagine. *[Aside.]*

*Ped.* *[Within.]* Violante, where are you, child?

*Enter Don PEDRO.*

Why, how came the garden door open?—Ha! how now, who have we here?

*Vio.* Humph!—He'll certainly discover him.

[*Aside.*

*Flo.* 'Tis my mother, an't please you, sir.

[*She and Felix both curtsy.*

*Ped.* Your mother! by St. Andrew she's a strapper! why, you are a dwarf to her.——How many children have you, good woman?

*Vio.* Oh, if he speaks we are lost. [*Aside.*

*Flo.* Oh, dear senior, she cannot hear you; she has been deaf these twenty years.

*Ped.* Alas, poor woman!—Why, you muffle her up as if she were blind too.

*Fel.* Would I were fairly off. [*Aside.*

*Ped.* Turn up her hood.

*Vio.* Undone for ever!——St. Anthony forbid. Oh, sir, she has the dreadfulest unlucky eyes——Pray don't look upon them; I made her keep her hood shut on purpose.——Oh, oh, oh, oh!

*Ped.* Eyes!——Why, what's the matter with her eyes?

*Flo.* My poor mother, sir, is much afflicted with the cholic, and about two months ago she had it grievously in her stomach, and was over-persuaded to take a dram of filthy English Geneva——which immediately flew up into her head, and caused such a defluxion in her eyes, that she could never since bear the day-light.

*Ped.* Say you so?——Poor woman!——Well, make her sit down, Violante, and give her a glass of wine.

*Vio.* Let her daughter give her a glass below, sir:——For my part, she has frightened me so I



sha'n't be myself these two hours—I am sure her eyes are evil eyes.

*Fel.* Well hinted."

*Ped.* Well, well, do so.—Evil eyes! there are no evil eyes, child.

*Flo.* Come along, mother—[*Speaks loud.*]—

[*Exeunt Felix and Flora.*]

*Vio.* I'm glad he's gone.

[*Aside.*]

*Ped.* Hast thou heard the news, Violante?

*Vio.* What news, sir?

*Ped.* Why, Vasquez tells me that Don Lopez' daughter Isabella has run away from her father: that lord has very ill fortune with his children.—Well, I'm glad my daughter has no inclination to mankind, that my house is plagued with no suitors.

[*Aside.*]

*Vio.* This is the first word ever I heard of it: I pity her frailty—

*Ped.* Well said, Violante.—Next week I intend thy happiness shall begin.

*Enter FLORA.*

*Vio.* I don't intend to stay so long, thank you, papa.

[*Aside.*]

*Ped.* My Lady Abbess writes word she longs to see thee, and has provided every thing in order for thy reception.—Thou wilt lead a happy life, my girl—fifty times before that of matrimony—where an extravagant coxcomb might make a beggar of thee, or an ill-natured furly dog break thy heart.

*Flo.* Break her heart! she had as good have her bones broke, as to be a nun; I am sure I had rather of the two. You are wondrous kind, fir: but if I had such a father I know what I would do.

*Ped.* Why, what would you do, minx, ha?

*Flo.* I would tell him I had as good a right and title to the law of nature and the end of the creation as he had.

*Ped.* You would, mistress! who the devil doubts it?—A good assurance is a chambermaid's coat of arms, and lying and contriving the supporters.——Your inclinations are on tiptoe, it seems.——If I were your father, housewife, I'd have a penance enjoined you so strict, that you should not be able to turn you in your bed for a month.—You are enough to spoil your lady, housewife, if she had not abundance of devotion.

*Vio.* Fy, Flora! are you not ashamed to talk thus to my father?—You said yesterday you would be glad to go with me into the monastery.

*Flo.* Did I? I told a great lie, then.

*Ped.* She go with thee! no, no, she's enough to debauch the whole convent.—Well, child, remember what I said to thee: next week——

*Vio.* Ay, and what I am to do this, too. [*Aside.*] I am all obedient, fir; I care not how soon I change my condition.

*Flo.* But little does he think what change she means. [*Aside.*]

*Ped.* "Well said, Violante.—I am glad to find "her so willing to leave the world; but it is wholly

"owing to my prudent management. Did she know  
 "that she might command her fortune when she  
 "came at age, or upon day of marriage, perhaps  
 "she'd change her note.——But I have always  
 "told her that her grandfather left it with this pro-  
 "viso, that she turned nun. Now a small part of  
 "this twenty thousand pounds provides for her in  
 "the nunnery, and the rest is my own.——There  
 "is nothing to be got in this life without policy.—  
 "[*Aside.*]"——Well, child, I am going into the  
 country for two or three days, to settle some affairs  
 with thy uncle; and when I return, we'll proceed for  
 thy happiness, child.——Good bye, *Violante*; take care  
 of thyself. [*Exeunt Don Pedro and Violante.*]

*Flo.* So, now for the colonel.——Hift, hift,  
 colonel!

*Enter Colonel.*

*Col.* Is the coast clear?

*Flo.* Yes, if you can climb; for you must get  
 over the washhouse, and jump from the garden-wall  
 into the street.

*Col.* Nay, nay, I don't value my neck, if my in-  
 cognita answers but thy lady's promise.

[*Exeunt Col. and Flora.*]

*Enter FELIX.*

*Fel.* I have lain perdué under the stairs till I  
 watched the old man out. [*Violante opens the door.*]  
 "Death, I am prevented. [*Exit Felix.*]

*Enter VIOLANTE.*

*Vio.* Now to set my prisoner at liberty. [*Goes to the door, where the Colonel is hid.*] Sir, sir, you may appear.

*Enter FELIX, following her.*

*Fel.* May be so, madam? I had cause for my suspicion, I find. Treacherous woman!

*Vio.* Ha, Felix here! Nay, then all is discovered.

*Fel.* [*Draws.*] Villain! whoever thou art, come out, I charge thee, and take the reward of thy adulterous errand.

*Vio.* What shall I say?—Nothing but the Secret which I have sworn to Keep can reconcile this quarrel. [*Aside.*]

*Fel.* A coward! Nay, then I'll fetch you out; think not to hide thyself: no; by St. Anthony, an altar should not protect thee; "even there I'd reach thy heart, though all the saints were armed in thy defence." [*Exit.*]

*Vio.* Defend me, Heaven! what shall I do? I must discover Isabella, or here will be murder.

*Enter FLORA.*

*Flo.* I have helped the colonel off clear, madam.

*Vio.* Sayest thou so, my girl?—Then I am armed.

*Re-enter FELIX.*

*Fel.* Where has the devil, in compliance to your sex, conveyed him from my resentment?

*Vio.* Him! whom do you mean, my dear inquisitive spark? Ha, ha, ha, ha! you will never leave these jealous whims.

*Fel.* Will you never cease to impose upon me?

*Vio.* You impose upon yourself, my dear. Do you think I did not see you? Yes, I did, and resolved to put this trick upon you.

*Fel.* *Trick!*

*Vio.* *Yes, trick.* I knew you'd take the hint, and soon relapse into your wonted error. How easily your jealousy is fired! I shall have a blessed life with you.

*Fel.* Was there nothing in it then but only to try me?

*Vio.* Won't you believe your eyes?

*Fel.* *My eyes! No, nor my ears, nor any of my senses, for they have all deceived me.* Well, I am convinced that faith is as necessary in love as in religion; for the moment a man lets a woman know her conquest he resigns his senses, and sees nothing but what she'd have him.

*Vio.* And as soon as that man finds his love returned, she becomes as errant a slave as if she had already said after the priest.

*Fel.* The priest, Violante, would dissipate those fears, which cause these quarrels. When wilt thou make me happy?

*Vio.* To-morrow I will tell thee: my father is gone for two or three days to my uncle's; we have time enough to finish our affairs.—But prythee leave me now, lest some accident should bring my father.



*Fel.* To-morrow then——

Fly swift, ye Hours, and bring to-morrow on!——  
But must I leave you now, my Violante?

*Vio.* You must, my Felix.——We soon shall meet  
to part no more!

*Fel.* Oh, rapturous sounds! Charming woman!  
Thy words and looks have fill'd my heart  
With joy, and left no room for jealousy.  
Do thou like me each doubt and fear remove,  
And all to come be confidence and love. [Exit.

“ Enter ISABELLA.

“ *Isab.* I am glad my brother and you are recon-  
ciled, my dear, and the colonel escaped without  
“ his knowledge; I was frightened out of my wits  
“ when I heard him return. I know not how to  
“ express my thanks, woman, for what you suffered  
“ for my sake; my grateful acknowledgment shall  
“ ever wait you, and to the world proclaim the  
“ faith, truth, and honour of a woman.

“ *Vio.* Pr'ythee don't compliment thy friend, Isa-  
bella.—You heard the colonel, I suppose.

“ *Isab.* Every syllable: and am pleased to find I  
do not love in vain.

“ *Vio.* Thou hast caught his heart, it seems, and  
“ an hour hence may secure his person.—Thou hast  
“ made hasty work on't, girl.

“ *Isab.* From thence I draw my happiness; we  
“ shall have no accounts to make up, after consum-  
“ mation.

"She who for years protrudes her lover's pain,  
 "And makes him wish, and wait, and sigh in vain,  
 "To be his wife, when late she gives consent,  
 "Finds half his passion was in courtship spent;  
 "Whilst they, who boldly all delays remove,  
 "Find every hour a fresh supply of love. [Exeunt."

ACT V. SCENE I.

**FREDERICK'S House. Enter FELIX and FREDERICK.**

*Felix.*

**T**HIS hour has been propitious; I am reconcil'd to Violante, and you assure me Antonio is out of danger.

*Fred.* Your satisfaction is doubly mine.

*Enter LISSARDO.*

*Fel.* What haste you made, firrah, to bring me word if Violante went home.

*Liss.* I can give you very good reasons for my stay, sir.—Yes, sir, she went home.

*Fred.* Oh! your master knows that, for he has been there himself, Lissardo.

*Liss.* Sir, may I beg the favour of your ear?

*Fel.* What have you to say?

[*Whispers, and Felix seems uneasy.*

*Fred.* Ha! Felix changes colour at Lissardo's news! What can it be?

*Fel.* A Scots footman that belongs to Colonel Briton, an acquaintance of Frederick's, say you? The devil! If she be false, by Heaven I'll trace her. Pr'ythee, Frederick, do you know one Colonel Briton, a Scotsman?

*Fred.* Yes; why do you ask me?

*Fel.* Nay, no great matter; but my man tells me that he has had some little differences with a servant of his, that's all.

*Fred.* He is a good, harmless, innocent fellow; I am sorry for it. The colonel lodges in my house; I knew him formerly in England, and met him here by accident last night, and gave him an invitation home. He is a gentleman of good estate, besides his commission; of excellent principles, and strict honour, I assure you.

*Fel.* Is he a man of intrigue?

*Fred.* Like other men, I suppose. Here he comes.—

*Enter Colonel.*

Colonel, I began to think I had lost you.

*Col.* And not without some reason, if you knew all.

*Fel.* There's no danger of a fine gentleman's being lost in this town, sir.

*Col.* That compliment don't belong to me, sir; but, I assure you, I have been very near being run away with.

*Fred.* Who attempted it?

*Col.* Faith, I know not—only that she is a charming woman, I mean as much as I saw of her.

*Fel.* My heart swells with apprehension—some accidental rencounter.—

*Fred.* A tavern, I suppose, adjusted the matter.

*Col.* A tavern! no, no, fir; she is above that rank, I assure you: this nymph sleeps in a velvet bed, and lodgings every way agreeable.

*Fel.* Ha! a velvet bed!—I thought you said but now, fir, you knew her not.

*Col.* No more I don't, fir.

*Fel.* How came you then so well acquainted with her bed?

*Fred.* Ay, ay; come, come, unfold.

*Col.* Why then, you must know, gentlemen, that I was convey'd to her lodgings by one of Cupid's emissaries, called a chambermaid, in a chair, thro' fifty blind alleys, who, by the help of a key, let me into a garden.

*Fel.* 'Sdeath! a garden! this must be Violante's garden. [*Aside.*

*Col.* From thence conducted me into a spacious room, then dropt me a curtsy, told me her lady would wait on me presently; so, without unveiling, modestly withdrew.

*Fel.* Damn her modesty! This was Flora. [*Aside.*

*Fred.* Well, how then, colonel?

*Col.* Then, fir, immediately from another door issued forth a lady arm'd at both eyes, from whence such showers of darts fell round me, that had I not been covered with the shield of another beauty, I had infallibly fallen a martyr to her charms, for you must know I just saw her eyes—Eyes did I say?

no, no, hold; I saw but one eye, though I suppose it had a fellow equally as killing.

*Fel.* But how came you to see her bed, sir?—  
'Sdeath! this expectation gives a thousand racks.

[*Aside.*

*Col.* Why, upon her maid's giving notice her father was coming, she thrust me into the bed-chamber.

*Fel.* Upon her father's coming!

*Col.* Ay, so she said; but putting my ear to the key-hole of the door, I found it was another lover.

*Fel.* Confound the jilt! 'twas she without dispute.

[*Aside.*

*Fred.* Ah, poor Colonel! ha, ha, ha!

*Col.* I discover'd they had had a quarrel, but whether they were reconciled or not I can't tell, for the second alarm brought the father in good earnest, and had like to have made the gentleman and I acquainted, but she found some other stratagem to convey him out.

*Fel.* Contagion seize her, and make her body ugly as her soul! There is nothing left to doubt of now—'Tis plain 'twas she—Sure he knows me, and takes this method to insult me. 'Sdeath, I cannot bear it. [*Aside.*

*Fred.* So, when she had dispatched her old lover, she paid you a visit in her bed-chamber; ha! colonel?

*Col.* No, pox take the impertinent puppy! he spoil'd my diversion; I saw her no more.

*Fel.* Very fine! Give me patience, Heaven, or I shall burst with rage. [*Aside.*



*Fred.* That was hard.

*Col.* Nay, what was worse——*But, sir, dear sir, do hearken to this:* [*To Felix.*] The nymph that introduced me conveyed me out again over the top of a high wall, where I ran the danger of having my neck broke, for the father, it seems, had locked the door by which I enter'd.

*Fel.* That way I miss'd him.—Damn her invention! [*Aside.*] Pray, colonel——*Ha, ha, ha! it's very pleasant, ha, ha!*—Was this the same lady you met upon the *Terriero de passa* this morning?

*Col.* Faith, I can't tell, sir; I had a design to know who that lady was, but my dog of a footman, whom I had order'd to watch her home, fell fast asleep.—I gave him a good beating for his neglect, and I have never seen the rascal since.

*Fred.* Here he comes.

*Enter GIBBY.*

*Col.* Where have you been, firrah?

*Gib.* Troth, He been seeking ye, an like yer honour, these twa hoors and mair. I bring ye glad teedings, fir.

*Col.* What, have you found the lady?

*Gib.* Geud faith ha I, fir—and she's called *Donna Violante*, and her parent *Don Pedro de Mendosa*, and gin ye will gang wi' me, an like yer honour, Ise mak ye ken the hoose right weel.

*Fel.* Oh, torture! torture!

[*Aside.*

*Col.* Ha! *Violante!* that's the lady's name of the house where my incognita is: sure it could not be her; at least, it was not the same house I'm confident.

[*Aside.*

*Fred.* Violante! 'tis false; I would not have you credit him, colonel.

*Gib.* The deel burst my bladder, fir, gin I lee.

*Fel.* Sirrah, I say you do lie, and I'll make you eat it, you dog; [*Kicks him.*] and if your master will justify you——

*Col.* Not I faith, fir—I answer for nobody's lies but my own: if you please, kick him again.

*Gib.* But gin he does Ise na tak it, fir, gin he was a thousand Spaniards. [*Walks about in a passion.*]

*Col.* I ow'd you a beating, sirrah, and I'm oblig'd to this gentleman for taking the trouble off my hands; therefore, say no more; d'ye hear, fir? [*Aside to Gibby.*]

*Gib.* Troth de I, fir, and feel tee.

*Fred.* This must be a mistake, colonel, for I know Violante perfectly well, and I am certain she would not meet you upon the *Terriero de passa*.

*Col.* Don't be too positive, Frederick: now I have some reasons to believe it was that very lady.

*Fel.* You'd very much oblige me, fir, if you'd let me know these reasons.

*Col.* Sir!

*Fel.* Sir, I say, I have a right to inquire into these reasons you speak of.

*Col.* Ha, ha! really, fir, I cannot conceive how you or any man can have a right to inquire into my thoughts.

*Fel.* Sir, I have a right to every thing that relates to Violante——and he that traduces her fame, and refuses to give his reasons for't, is a villain.

[*Draws.*]

*Col.* What the devil have I been doing! Now, blisters on my tongue by dozens! [*Aside.*]

*Fred.* Pr'ythee, Felix, don't quarrel till you know for what: this is all a mistake I'm positive.

*Col.* Look ye, fir, that I dare draw my sword, I think, will admit of no dispute.—But though fighting's my trade, I'm not in love with it, and think it more honourable to decline this business than pursue it. This may be a mistake; however, I'll give you my honour never to have any affair, directly or indirectly, with Violante, provided she is your Violante; but if there should happen to be another of her name, I hope you would not engross all the Violantes in the kingdom.

*Fel.* Your vanity has given me sufficient reasons to believe I'm not mistaken. I'll not be impos'd upon, fir.

*Col.* Nor I be bully'd, fir.

*Fel.* Bully'd! 'Sdeath! such another word, and I'll nail thee to the wall.

*Col.* Are you sure of that, Spaniard? [*Draws.*]

*Gib.* [*Draws.*] Say na mair, mon. O' my soul, here's twa to twa. Dinna fear, fir, Gibby stonds by ye for the honour of Scotland. [*Vapours about.*]

*Fred.* By St. Anthony you sha'n't fight [*Interposes.*] on bare suspicion: be certain of the injury, and then——

*Fel.* That I will this moment; and then, fir—I hope you are to be found——

*Col.* Whenever you please, fir. [*Exit Felix.*]

*Gib.* 'Sbleed, fir! there ne'er was a Scotsman yet that sham'd to show his face. [*Strutting about.*]

*Fred.* So quarrels spring up like mushrooms, in a minute. Violante and he were but just reconcil'd, and you have furnish'd him with fresh matter for falling out again; and I am certain, colonel, Gibby is in the wrong.

*Gib.* Gin I be, fir, the mon that tald me leed, and gin he did, the deel be my landlord, hell my winter-quarters, and a rape my winding-sheet, gin I dee not lick him as lang as I can haud a stick in my hond, now see ye.

*Col.* I am sorry for what I have said for the lady's sake: but who could divine that she was his mistress? Pr'ythee, who is this warm spark?

*Fred.* He is the son of one of our grandees, nam'd Don Lopez de Pimentell, a very honest gentleman, but something passionate in what relates to his love. He is an only son, which may, perhaps, be one reason for indulging his passion.

*Col.* When parents have but one child, they either make a madman or a fool of him.

*Fred.* He is not the only child, he has a sister; but I think, thro' the severity of his father, who would have married her against her inclination, she has made her escape, and, notwithstanding he has offered five hundred pounds, he can get no tidings of her.

*Col.* Ha! how long has she been missing?

*Fred.* Nay, but since last night, it seems.

*Col.* Last night! the very time! How went she?

*Fred.* Nobody can tell; they conjecture through the window.

*Col.* I'm transported! this must be the lady I caught. What sort of a woman is she?

*Fred.* Middle-sized, a lovely brown, a fine pouting lip, eyes that roll and languish, and seem to speak the exquisite pleasure her arms could give.

*Col.* Oh! I am fir'd with this description——'tis the very she.—What's her name?

*Fred.* Isabella.—You are transported, colonel.

*Col.* I have a natural tendency in me to the flesh, thou know'st, and who can hear of charms so exquisite, and yet remain unmov'd?—Oh, how I long for the appointed hour! I'll to the *Terriero de passa*, and wait my happiness: if she fails to meet me, I'll once more attempt to find her at *Violante's* in spite of her brother's jealousy. [*Aside.*] Dear Frederick! I beg your pardon; but I had forgot I was to meet a gentleman upon business at five: I'll endeavour to dispatch him, and wait on you again as soon as possible!

*Fred.* Your humble servant, colonel. [*Exit.*]

*Col.* Gibby, I have no business with you at present. [*Exit Colonel.*]

*Gib.* That's weel.—Now will I gang and seek this loon, and gar him gang with me to Don Pedro's hoose.—Gin he'll no gang of himself, I'll gar him gang by the lug, sir. Godswarbit! Gibby hates a leer. [*Exit.*]



SCENE II.

*Changes to VIOLANTE's Lodgings. Enter VIOLANTE and ISABELLA.*

*Isab.* The hour draws on, Violante, and now my heart begins to fail me; but I resolve to venture for all that.

*Vio.* What, does your courage sink, Isabella?

*Isab.* Only the force of resolution a little retreated, but I'll rally it again for all that.

*Enter FLORA.*

*Vio.* Don Felix is coming up, madam.

*Isab.* My brother! which way shall I get out?—  
Dispatch him as soon as you can, dear Violante.

*[Exit into the closet.]*

*Vio.* I will.

*Enter FELIX, in a surly humour.*

Felix, what brings you home so soon? did I not say to-morrow?

*Fel.* My passion chokes me; I cannot speak—  
Oh, I shall burst! *[Aside. Throws himself into a chair.]*

*Vio.* Bless me! are you not well, my Felix?

*Fel.* Yes—No—I don't know what I am.

*Vio.* Hey-day! what's the matter now? another jealous whim!

*Fel.* With what an air she carries it!—I sweat at her impudence. *[Aside.]*

*Vio.* If I were in your place, Felix, I'd choose

to stay at home when these fits of spleen are upon me, and not trouble such persons as are not obliged to bear with them.

*[Here he affects to be careless of her.]*

*Fel.* I am very sensible, madam, of what you mean: I disturb you, no doubt; but were I in a better humour, I should not incommode you less: I am too well convinced you could easily dispense with my visit.

*Vio.* When you behave yourself as you ought to do, no company so welcome—but when you reserve me for your ill-nature, I waive your merit, and consider what's due to myself.—And I must be free to tell you, Felix, that these humours of yours will abate, if not absolutely destroy, the very principles of love.

*Fel.* *[Rising.]* And I must be so free to tell you, madam, that since you have made such ill returns to the respect that I have paid you, all you do shall be indifferent to me for the future; and you shall find me abandon your empire with so little difficulty, that I'll convince the world your chains are not so hard to break as your vanity would tempt you to believe.—I cannot brook the provocation you give.

*Vio.* This is not to be borne—insolent! you abandon! you! whom I have so often forbid ever to see me more! Have you not fall'n at my feet? implored my favour and forgiveness? did you not trembling wait, and wish, and sigh, and swear, yourself into my heart? Ungrateful man! if my chains are so easily broke as you pretend, then you are the filliest coxcomb living you did not break

ACT V. A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET.

them long ago; and I must think him capable of brooking any thing, on whom such usage could make no impression.

"*Isab.* [*Peeping.*] A deuce take your quarrels! "she'll never think on me."

*Fel.* I always believed, madam, my weakness was the greatest addition to your power; you would be less imperious had my inclination been less forward to oblige you.—You have indeed forbid me your sight, but your vanity even then assured you I would return, and I was fool enough to feed your pride.—Your eyes, with all their boasted charms, have acquired the greatest glory in conquering me—and the brightest passage of your life is wounding this heart with such arms as pierce but few persons of my rank. [*Walks about in a great pet.*]

*Vio.* Matchless arrogance! True, sir, I should have kept measures better with you, if the conquest had been worth preserving; but we easily hazard what gives us no pain to lose.—As for my eyes, you are mistaken if you think they have vanquished none but you: there are men above your boasted rank who have confess'd their power, when their misfortune in pleasing you made them obtain such a disgraceful victory.

*Fel.* Yes, madam, I am no stranger to your victories.

*Vio.* And what you call the brightest passage of my life is not the least glorious part of yours.

*Fel.* Ha, ha! don't put yourself in a passion, madam; for, I assure you, after this day I shall give you no trouble.—You may meet your sparks

on the *Terriero de passa* at four in the morning, without the least regard to me—for, when I quit your chamber, the world sha'n't bring me back.

*Vio.* I am so well pleased with your resolution, I don't care how soon you take your leave.—But what you mean by the *Terriero de passa* at four in the morning I cann't guess.

*Fel.* No, no, no, not you.—You was not upon the *Terriero de passa* at four this morning.

*Vio.* No, I was not; but if I were, I hope I may walk where I please, and at what hour I please, without asking your leave.

*Fel.* Oh, doubtless, madam! and you might meet Colonel Briton there, and afterwards send your emissary to fetch him to your house—and, upon your father's coming in, thrust him into your bed-chamber—without asking my leave. 'Tis no business of mine, if you are expos'd among all the footmen in town—nay, if they ballad you, and cry you about at a halfpenny apiece—they may without my leave.

*Vio.* Audacious! don't provoke me—don't: my reputation is not to be sported with [*Going up to him.*] at this rate—no, sir, it is not. [*Bursts into tears.*] Inhuman Felix!—Oh, Isabella! what a train of ills thou hast brought on me! [*Aside.*

*Fel.* Ha! I cannot bear to see her weep—a woman's tears are far more fatal than our swords. [*Aside.*] Oh, Violante—'Sdeath! what a dog am I! Now have I no power to stir.—Dost not thou know such a person as Colonel Briton?

Prythee tell me, didst not thou meet him at four this morning upon the *Tertiero de passa*?

*Vio.* Were it not to clear my fame, I would not answer thee, thou black ingrate!—but I cannot bear to be reproached with what I even blush to think of, much less to act. By Heaven, I have not seen the *Tertiero de passa* this day.

*Fel.* Did not a Scotch footman attack you in the street neither, Violante?

*Vio.* Yes; but he mistook me for another—or he was drunk, I know not which.

*Fel.* And do not you know this Scotch colonel?

*Vio.* Pray ask me no more questions: this night shall clear my reputation, and leave you without excuse for your base suspicions. More than this I shall not satisfy you, therefore pray leave me.

*Fel.* Didst thou ever love me, Violante?

*Vio.* I'll answer nothing—You was in haste to be gone just now; I should be very well pleas'd to be alone, sir. *[She sits down, and turns aside.]*

*Fel.* I shall not long interrupt your contemplation.—Stubborn to the last. *[Aside.]*

*Vio.* Did ever woman involve herself as I have done!

*Fel.* Now would I give one of my eyes to be friends with her, for something whispers to my soul, she is not guilty.—*[He pauses, then pulls a chair, and sits by her at a little distance, looking at her some time without speaking, then draws a little nearer to her.]* Give me your hand at parting, however, Violante, won't you—*[He lays his hand upon her knee several times.]* won't you—won't you—won't you?



*Vio.* [*Half regarding him.*] Won't I do what?

*Fel.* You know what I would have, Violante.  
Oh, my heart!

*Vio.* [*Smiling.*] I thought my chains were easily broke. [*Lays her hand into his.*]

*Fel.* [*Draws his chair close to her, and kisses her hand in a rapture.*] Too well thou knowest thy strength.—Oh, my charming angel! my heart is all thy own. Forgive my hasty passion—'tis the transport of a love sincere. *Oh, Violante, Violante!*

*Don PEDRO within.*

*Ped.* Bid Sancho get a new wheel to my chariot presently.

*Vio.* Bless me, my father returned! What shall we do now, Felix? We are ruined past redemption.

*Fel.* No, no, no, my love, I can leap from the closet window.

[*Runs to the door where Isabella is, who claps to the door, and bolts it within side.*]

*Isab.* [*Peeping.*] "Say you so? But I shall prevent you."

*Fel.* Confusion! Somebody bolts the door within side. I'll see who you have concealed here, if I die for't. Oh, Violante! hast thou again sacrificed me to my rival. [*Draws.*]

*Vio.* By Heaven, thou hast no rival in my heart, let that suffice—Nay, sure you will not let my father find you here—Distraction!

*Fel.* Indeed but I shall—except you command

this door to be opened, and that way conceal me from his sight.

*[He struggles with her to come at the door.]*

*Vio.* Hear me, Felix—Though I were sure the refusing what you ask would separate us for ever, by all that's powerful, you shall not enter here. Either you do love me or you do not: convince me by your obedience.

*Fel.* That's not the matter in debate—I will know who is in this closet, let the consequence be what it will. Nay, nay, you strive in vain: I will go in.

*Vio.* Thou shalt not go——

*Enter Don PEDRO.*

*Ped.* Hey-day! what's here to do? I will go in, and you shan't go in—and I will go in—Why, who are you, sir?

*Fel.* 'Sdeath, what shall I say now?

*Ped.* Don Felix, pray what's your business in my house? ha, sir?

*Vio.* Oh, sir, what miracle returned you home so soon? some angel 'twas that brought my father back to succour the distressed.—This ruffian, he—I cannot call him gentleman—has committed such an uncommon rudeness, as the most profligate wretch would be ashamed to own.

*Fel.* Ha! what the devil does she mean? *[Aside.]*

*Vio.* As I was at my devotion in my closet, I heard a loud knocking at my door, mixed with a woman's voice, which seemed to imply she was in danger——

*Fel.* I am confounded!

*[Aside.]*

*Vio.* I flew to the door with the utmost speed, where a lady veiled rushed in upon me; who, falling on her knees, begged my protection from a gentleman, who she said pursued her. I took compassion on her tears, and locked her into this closet; but in the surprize having left open the door, this very person whom you see with his sword drawn ran in, protesting, if I did not give her up to his revenge, he'd force the door.

*Fel.* What in the name of goodness does she mean to do? hang me? [*Aside.*

*Vio.* I strove with him till I was out of breath, and had you not come as you did he must have entered—But he's in drink, I suppose; or he could not have been guilty of such an indecorum.

[*Leering at Felix.*

*Ped.* I'm amazed!

*Fel.* The devil never failed a woman at a pinch:—what a tale has she formed in a minute!—In drink, quotha! a good ha: I'll lay hold on't to bring myself off. [*Aside.*

*Ped.* Fie, Don Felix!—no sooner rid of one broil, but you are commencing another.—To assault a lady with a naked sword, derogates much from the character of a gentleman, I assure you.

*Fel.* [*Counterfeits drunkenness.*] Who, I assault a lady—upon honour the lady assaulted me, sir, and would have seized this body politic, on the king's highway——Let her come out, and deny it if she can——Pray, sir, command the door to be opened; and let her prove me a liar, if she knows how——I have been drinking claret, and

Champaign, and Burgundy, and other French wines, fir, but I love my own country for all that.

*Ped.* Ay, ay, who doubts it, fir? Open the door, Violante, and let the lady come out. Come, I warrant thee he sha'n't hurt her.

*Fel.* No, no, I won't hurt the dear creature.—  
Now which way will she come off? [*Aside.*]

*Vio.* [*Unlocks the door.*] Come forth, madam; none shall dare to touch your veil—I'll convey you out with safety, or lose my life.—I hope she understands me. [*Aside.*]

*Enter ISABELLA veiled, and crosses the stage.*

*Isab.* Excellent girl! [*Exit.*]

*Fel.* The devil!—a woman!—I'll see if she be really so. [*Aside.*]

*Vio.* [*To Felix.*] Get clear of my father, and follow me to the *Terriero de passa*, where all mistakes shall be rectified. [*Exit with Isabella.*]

[*Don Felix offers to follow her.*]

*Ped.* [*Drawing his sword.*] Not a step, fir, till the lady is past your recovery; I never suffer the laws of hospitality to be violated in my house, fir.—I'll keep Don Felix here till you see her safe out, Violante.—Come, fir, you and I will take a pipe and a bottle together.

*Fel.* Damn your pipe, and damn your bottle!—I hate drinking and smoking, and how will you help yourself, old whiskers?

*Ped.* As to smoking or drinking you have your liberty; but you shall stay, fir.

*Fel.* But I won't stay—for I don't like your company; besides, I have the best reasons in the world for my not staying.

*Ped.* Ay, what's that?

*Fel.* Why I am going to be married, and so good bye.

*Ped.* To be married! it can't be. *Why, you are drunk, Felix.*

*Fel.* Drunk! ay, to be sure; you don't think I'd go to be married if I were sober—but drunk or sober, I am going to be married, for all that—and if you won't believe me, to convince you I'll shew you the contract, old gentleman.

*Ped.* Ay, do: come, let's see this contract, then.

*Fel.* Yes, Yes; I'll shew you the contract—I'll shew you the contract—Here, sir, here's the contract.

[Draws a pistol.

*Ped.* [Starting.] Well, well, I'm convinced—go, go—pray go and be married, sir.

*Fel.* Yes, yes; I'll go—I'll go and be married; but sha'n't we take a bottle first?

*Ped.* No, no—pray, dear sir, go and be married.

*Fel.* Very well, very well. [Going.] but I insist upon your taking one glass, though.

*Ped.* No, not now—some other time—consider the lady waits.

*Fel.* What a cross old fool! first he will, and then he won't; and then he will, and then he won't. [Exit.

*Enter Servant.*

*Serv.* Here's Don Lopez de Pimentell to wait on you, senior.



*Ped.* What the devil does he want? he is not going to be married too—Bring him up; he's in pursuit of his son, I suppose.

*Enter Don LOPEZ.*

*Lop.* I am glad to find you at home, Don Pedro; I was told that you was seen upon the road to—this afternoon.

*Ped.* That might be, my lord; but I had the misfortune to break the wheel of my chariot, which obliged me to return.—What is your pleasure with me, my lord?

*Lop.* I am informed that my daughter is in your house.

*Ped.* That's more than I know, my lord; but here was your son, just now, as drunk as an emperor.

*Lop.* My son drunk!—I never saw him in drink in my life.—Where is he, pray, sir?

*Ped.* Gone to be married.

*Lop.* Married!—to whom?—I don't know that he courted any body.

*Ped.* Nay, I know nothing of that—but I'm sure he shewed me the contract.—Within, there!

*Enter Servant.*

Bid my daughter come hither; she'll tell you another story, my lord.

*Serv.* She's gone out in a chair, sir.

*Ped.* Out in a chair!—what do you mean, sir?

*Serv.* As I say, sir;—and Donna Isabella went in another just before her.

*Lop.* *Isabella!*

*Serv.* And Don Felix followed in another;—I overheard them all bid the chair go to the *Terriero de passa*.

*Ped.* Ha! what business has my daughter there? I am confounded, and know not what to think—within there. [*Exit.*

*Lop.* My heart misgives me plaguily.—Call me an alguazil—I'll pursue them straight. [*Exit.*

### SCENE III.

*Changes to the Street before Don PEDRO's House. Enter LISSARDO.*

*Liss.* I wish I could see Flora——methinks I have an hankering kindness after the slut——we must be reconciled.

*Enter GIBBY.*

*Gib.* Aw my sal, fir, but Ise blithe to find yee here now.

*Liss.* Ha, brother! give me thy hand, boy.

*Gib.* No se fast, se ye me—Brether me ne brethers; I scorn a leer as muckle as a thiefe, se ye now, and ye must gang intul this house with me, and justifie to Donna Violante's face, that she was the lady that gang'd in here this morn, se ye me, or the deel ha my sal, fir, but ye and I shall be twa folks.

*Liss.* Justify it to Donna Violante's face, quotha! For what? Sure you don't know what you say?

*Gib.* Troth de I, fir, as weel as yee de: there-fore come along, and make no mair words about it.

*Liss.* Why, what the devil do you mean? Don't you confider you are in Portugal? Is the fellow mad?

*Gib.* Fellow! Ise none of yer fellow, fir; and gin the place were hell, I'd gar ye do me justice. [*Lissardo going.*] Nay, the deel a feet ye gang.

[*Lays hold of him, and knocks.*]

*Liss.* Ha! Don Pedro himself: I wish I were fairly off. [*Aside.*]

*Enter Don PEDRO.*

*Ped.* How now? What makes you knock so loud?

*Gib.* Gin this be Don Pedro's house, fir, I wou'd speak with Donna Violante, his daughter.

*Ped.* Ha! what is it you want with my daughter, pray?

*Gib.* An she be your daughter, and lik your honour, command her to come out, and answer for herself now, and either justify or disprove what this child told me this morn.

*Liss.* So, here will be a fine piece of work.

[*Aside.*]

*Ped.* Why, what did he tell you, ha?

*Gib.* By my sal, fir, Ise tell you aw the truth. —My master got a pratty lady upon the how de call't—*Passa*—here at five this morn, and he gar me watch her heam—and in truth I lodg'd her here; and meeting this ill-favoured thiefe, se ye me, I speered wha she was—and he tald me her

name was Donna Violante, Don Pedro de Mendoza's daughter.

*Ped.* Ha! my daughter with a man, abroad at five in the morning! Death, hell, and furies! By Saint Anthony, I'm undone.

*Gib.* Wounds, fir! ye put yer faint intul bonny company.

*Ped.* Who is your master, you dog you? "Ads—heart I shall be trick'd of my daughter and money too, that's worst of all."

*Gib.* You dog you! 'Sblead, fir! don't call names.—I won't tell you who my master is, se ye me now.

*Ped.* And who are you, rascal, that know my daughter so well? ha! [*Holds up his cane.*]

*Liff.* What shall I say, to make him give this Scotch dog a good beating? [*Aside.*] I know your daughter, signior! Not I; I never saw your daughter in all my life.

*Gib.* [*Knocks him down with his fist.*] Deel ha my sal, sar, gin ye get no your carich for that lie now.

*Ped.* What, hoa! where are all my servants?

*Enter Colonel, FELIX, ISABELLA, and VIOLANTE.*

Raise the house in pursuit of my daughter.

"*Ser.* Here she comes, signior."

*Col.* Hey-day! what's here to do?

*Gib.* This is the loonlike tik, an lik your honour, that sent me heam with a lee this morn.

*Col.* Come, come, 'tis all well, Gibby; let him rise.

*Ped.* I am thunderstruck—and have no power to speak one word.

*Fel.* This is a day of jubilee, Lissardo; no quarrelling with him this day.

*Liss.* A pox take his fists!—Egad, these Britons are but a word and a blow.

*Enter Don Lopez.*

*Lop.* So, have I found you, daughter? Then you have not hanged yourself yet, I see.

*Col.* But she is married, my lord.

*Lop.* Married! Zounds! to whom?

*Col.* Even to your humble servant, my lord. If you please to give us your blessing. [*Kneels.*]

*Lop.* Why, hark ye, mistress, are you really married?

*Isab.* Really so, my lord.

*Lop.* And who are you, sir?

*Col.* An honest North-Briton by birth, and a colonel by commission, my lord.

*Lop.* An heretic! the devil!

[*Holding up his hands.*]

*Ped.* She has played you a slippery trick, indeed, my lord.—Well, my girl, thou hast been to see thy friend married—next week thou shalt have a better husband, my dear. [*To Violante.*]

*Fel.* Next week is a little too soon, sir; I hope to live longer than that.

*Ped.* What do you mean, sir? You have not made a rib of my daughter too, have you?

*Vio.* Indeed but he has, sir: I know not how, but he took me in an unguarded minute—when my



thoughts were not over-strong for a nunhery, father.

*Lop.* Your daughter has play'd you a slippery trick too, signior.

*Ped.* But your son shall never be the better for't, my lord; her twenty thousand pounds was left on certain conditions, and I'll not part with a shilling.

*Lop.* But we have a certain thing, call'd law, shall make you do justice, sir.

*Ped.* Well, we'll try that——my lord, much good may it do you with your daughter-in-law.

[*Exit.*

*Lop.* I wish you much joy of your rib. [Exit.]

*Enter FREDERICK.*

*Fel.* Frederick, welcome!—I sent for thee to be partaker of my happiness, and pray give me leave to introduce you to the cause of it.

*Fred.* Your messenger has told me all, and I sincerely share in all your happiness.

*Col.* To the right about, Frederick, with thy friend joy.

*Fred.* I do with all my soul—and, madam, I congratulate your deliverance.—Your suspicions are clear'd now, I hope, Felix?

*Fel.* They are, and I heartily ask the colonel pardon, and wish him happy with my sister; for love has taught me to know that every man's happiness consists in choosing for himself.

*Liss.* After that rule I fix here. [To *Flora*.]

*Flo.* That's your mistake; I prefer my lady's service, and turn you over to her that pleaded right and title to you to-day.

*Liss.* Choose, proud fool! I sha'n't ask you twice.

*Gib.* What say ye now, lass—will ye ge yer hond to poor Gibby?—"What say you," will you dance the reel of Bogie with me?

*Inis.* That I may not leave my lady, I take you at your word; and though our wooing has been short, I'll by her example love you dearly.

"[*Music plays.*]

"*Fel.* Hark, I hear the music; somebody has done us the favour to call them in.

"[*A country-dance.*]

"*Gib.* Wounds, this is bonny music!—How caw ye that thing that ye pinch by the craig, and tickle the weamb, and make it cry grum, grum?

"*Fred.* Oh! that's a guitar, Gibby."

*Fel.* Now, my Violante, I shall proclaim thy virtues to the world.

*Let us no more thy sex's conduct blame,  
Since thou'rt a proof, to their eternal shame,  
That man has no advantage, but the name.*

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

## EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. PHILIPS.

*CUSTOM*, with all our modern laws combin'd,  
Has given such power despotick to mankind,  
That we have only so much virtue now  
As they are pleas'd in favour to allow;  
Thus, like mechanic work, we're us'd with scorn,  
And wound up only for a present turn.  
Some are for having our whole sex enslav'd,  
Asserting we've no souls, and can't be sav'd\*;  
But were the women all of my opinion,  
We'd soon shake off this false, usurp'd dominion,  
We'd make the tyrant's own that we cou'd prove  
As fit for other bus'ness as for love.  
Lord! what prerogatives might we obtain,  
Could we from yielding a few months refrain!  
How fondly would our dangling lovers dote!  
What homage wou'd be paid to petticoat!  
'T wou'd be a jest to see the change of fate;  
How might we all of politics debate,  
Promise and swear what we ne'er meant to do,  
And, what's still harder, Keep our Secrets too.  
I marry! Keep a Secret, says a beau,  
And sneers at some ill-natur'd wit below;  
But faith, if we shou'd tell but half we know,  
There's many a spruce young fellow in this place  
Wou'd never more presume to shew his face.

\* Alluding to an ironical pamphlet tending to prove that women had no souls.



---

*Women are not so weak, whate'er men prate ;  
How many tip-top beaux have had the fate  
T' enjoy from mamma's Secrets their estate ;  
Who, if her early folly had been known,  
Had rid behind the coach that's now their own.  
But here the Wondrous Secret you discover,  
A lady ventures for a friend—a lover.  
Prodigious ! for my part, I frankly own,  
I ad spoil'd the Wonder, and the Woman shown.*



It was not until the year 1791, that the  
first attempt was made to form a  
society for the purpose of promoting  
the study of the history and  
philosophy of the human mind.  
The object of the society was to  
investigate the principles of  
human nature, and to determine  
the limits of human knowledge.  
The society was formed by a  
number of gentlemen of letters,  
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*[The main body of the page contains a large, dense block of text that is extremely faded and illegible. It appears to be a list or a collection of entries, possibly names or titles, arranged in columns.]*

*It will not be left among your Herlings your  
Hiddsburgs, and Devilburgs.*

Dublin Published by Will<sup>m</sup> Jones N<sup>o</sup> 36 Dame Street.



*J. Clayton sculp.*

Dublin Published by Will.<sup>m</sup> Jones N<sup>o</sup> 86 Dame Street.



THE  
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

COMEDY.

---

By G. COLMAN AND D. GARRICK, Esqrs.

---

ADAPTED FOR  
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE  
THEATRES-ROYAL,  
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

---

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS.

*By Permission of the Managers.*

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"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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W. JONES.

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THE  
*CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.*

---

OF one of the best Comedies in our language, written by two of the happiest geniuses of the time, though curiosity would wish the knowledge of their several shares in the composition, we can give nothing satisfactory as an answer.

If internal evidence point out any thing of this sort, it seems to be that the design, if not even the execution of O'NEILL, came from GARRICK. The Comedy, without it, certainly had been good, but it could not have been striking.

The praise of the Authors having been awarded, it gives the Writer pleasure to devote one page to the just fame of the Actor. The character, as performed by Mr. KING, is the first comic effort of the Stage.

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## PROLOGUE.

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---

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mr. HOLLAND.

*POETS and Painters, who from nature draw  
Their best and richest stores, have made this law :  
That each should neighbourly assist his brother,  
And steal with decency from one another.  
To-night, your matchless Hogarth gives the thought,  
Which from his canvas to the stage is brought.  
And who so fit to warm the poet's mind,  
As he who pictur'd morals and mankind ?  
But not the same their characters and scenes ;  
Both labour for one end, by different means ;  
Each, as it suits him, takes a separate road,  
Their one great object, MARRIAGE-A-LA-MODE !  
Where titles deign with cits to have and hold,  
And change rich blood for more substantial gold !  
And honour'd trade from interest turns aside,  
To hazard happiness for titled pride.  
The Painter dead, yet still he charms the eye ;  
While England lives, his fame can never die :  
But he, who struts his hour upon the stage,  
Can scarce extend his fame for half an age ;  
Nor pen nor pencil can the actor save,  
The art and artist share one common grave.*

PROLOGUE.

O let me drop one tributary tear,  
On poor Jack Falstaff's grave and Juliet's bier!  
You to their worth must testimony give;  
'Tis in your hearts alone their fame can live.  
Still as the scenes of life will shift away,  
The strong impressions of their art decay.  
Your children cannot feel what you have known;  
They'll boast of QUINS and CARRERS of their own:  
The greatest glory of our happy few,  
Is to be felt, and be approv'd by YOU.

---

---

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

---

COVENT-GARDEN.

*Men.*

Lord OGLEBY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. King.
Sir JOHN MELVIL,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
STERLING,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Quick.
LOVEWELL,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
CANTON,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. C. Powell.
BRUSH,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Bernard.
Serjeant FLOWER,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Powel.
TRAVERSE,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
TRAUMAN,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Evatt.

*Women.*

Mrs. HEIDELBERG,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Webb.
Miss STERLING,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Mattocks.
FANNY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Merry.
BETTY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Wells.
Chambermaid,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Rock.
TRUSTY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Platt.



~~THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE~~  
~~ACT I. SCENE I.~~

THE

CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,

ACT I. SCENE I.

*A Room in STERLING'S House. Miss FANNY and BETTY meeting.*

*Betty running in,*

**MA'AM!** Miss Fanny! ma'am!

*Fanny.* What's the matter! Betty!

*Betty.* Oh! ma'am! as sure as I am alive, here is your husband—

*Fanny.* Hush! my dear Betty! if any body in the house should hear you, I am ruined.

*Betty.* Mercy on me! it has frightened me to such a degree that my heart is come up to my mouth.—But as I was saying, ma'am, here's that dear, sweet—

*Fanny.* Have a care! Betty.

*Betty.* Lord! I am bewitched, I think.—But as I was a saying, ma'am, here's Mr. Lovewell just come from London.

*Fanny.* Indeed!

*Betty.* Yes, indeed and indeed, ma'am, he is. I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

*Fanny.* I am glad to hear it.—But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again, on any account. You know, we have agreed never to drop any expression of that sort, for fear of an accident.

*Betty.* Dear ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth, than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave—and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doom's day for Betty.

*Fanny.* I know you are faithful—but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

*Betty.* Very true, ma'am! and yet I vow and protest, there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

*Fanny.* Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then, I hope, you may mention it to any body.—Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

*Betty.* The sooner the better, I believe: for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

*Fanny.* Fie, Betty. [Blushing.]

*Betty.* Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms—

*Fanny.* Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

*Betty.* Angry!—Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it, as much as if it was my own.—I meant no harm, Heaven knows.

*Fanny.* Well, say no more of this—It makes me uneasy—All I have to ask of you, is to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter, till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

*Betty.* Me reveal it!—If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world—And as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother—But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening.—For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as—

*Fanny.* See there now! again. Pray be careful.

*Betty.* Well—well—nobody hears me.—Man and wife.—I'll say no more—what I tell you is very true for all that—

*Lovewell.* [*Calling within.*] William!

*Betty.* Hark! I hear your husband—

*Fanny.* What!

*Betty.* I say, here comes Mr. Lovewell—Mind the caution I give you—I'll be whipped now, if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me—as you sow, so you must reap—as you brew, so you must bake.—I'll e'en slip down the back-stairs and leave you together. [*Exit.*]

*Fanny.* I see, I see I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New distress—

ses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

*Enter LOVEWELL.*

*Lov.* My love!—How's this?—In tears?—Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted! Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

*Fanny.* Oh, Mr. Lovewell; the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family; and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

*Lov.* Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy.—To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Every thing now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

*Fanny.* End how it will, I am resolved it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind to be mistress of the universe.



*Lord.* Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion!—I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening—and I dare say, within this hour.

*Fanny.* I am sorry for it.

*Lord.* Why so?

*Fanny.* No matter—Only let us disclose our marriage immediately!

*Lord.* As soon as possible.

*Fanny.* But directly.

*Lord.* In a few days, you may depend on it.

*Fanny.* To-night—or to-morrow morning.

*Lord.* That, I fear, will be impracticable.

*Fanny.* Nay, but you must.

*Lord.* Must! Why?

*Fanny.* Indeed you must, I have the most alarming reasons for it.

*Lord.* Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them—What are they?

*Fanny.* I cannot tell you.

*Lord.* Not tell me?

*Fanny.* Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with every thing.

*Lord.* Sorry they are coming!—Must be discovered!—What can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

*Fanny.* Do not disturb yourself with conjectures—but rest assured, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be



it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

*Lov.* You put me upon the rack.—I would do any thing to make you easy.—But you know your father's temper.—Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence, can ever make him forego—and these he thinks his money will purchase.—You know too your aunt's, Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendour of high life; her contempt for every thing that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands; by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family: now if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might, perhaps, be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

*Fanny.* But if they are made acquainted with it otherwise than by ourselves, it will be ten times worse: and a discovery grows every day more probable. The whole family have long suspected our affection. We are also in the power of a foolish maid-servant; and if we may even depend on her fidelity, we cannot answer for her discretion.—Discover it therefore, immediately, lest some accident should bring it to light, and involve us in additional disgrace.

*Lov.* Well—well—I mean to discover it soon, but would not do it too precipitately. I have more than once sounded Mr. Sterling about it, and will attempt him more seriously the next opportunity.

But my principal hopes are these.—My relationship to Lord Ogleby, and his having plated me with your father, have been, you know, the first links in the chain of this connection between the two families; in consequence of which, I am at present in high favour with all parties: while they all remain thus well affected to me, I propose to lay our case before the old lord; and if I can prevail on him to mediate in this affair, I make no doubt but he will be able to appease your father; and, being a lord and a man of quality, I am sure he may bring Mrs. Heidelberg into good humour at any time.—Let me beg you, therefore, to have but a little patience, as, you see, we are upon the very eve of a discovery, that must probably be to our advantage.

*Fanny.* Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

*Lov.* But in the mean time make yourself easy.

*Fanny.* As easy as I can, I will.—We had better not remain together any longer at present.—Think of this business, and let me know how you proceed.

*Love.* Depend on my care! But, pray, be cheerful.

*Fanny.* I will.

*As she is going out, enter STERLING.*

*Sterl.* Hey-day! who have we got here?

*Fanny.* [Confused.] Mr. Lovewell, sir!

*Sterl.* And where are you going, hussy?

*Fanny.* To my sister's chamber, sir! [Exit.

*Sterl.* Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner?—Well—well—

let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

*Lov.* Would to Heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

*Sterl.* Yourself! eh, Lovewell?

*Lov.* With your pleasure, sir!

*Sterl.* Mighty well!

*Lov.* And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

*Sterl.* Better and better!

*Lov.* And if I could but obtain your consent, sir—

*Sterl.* What! you marry Fanny!—no—no—that will never do, Lovewell!—You're a good boy, to be sure—I have a great value for you—but can't think of you for a son-in-law.—There's no stuff in the case; no money, Lovewell!

*Lov.* My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendor, sufficient to keep us above distress.—Add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it—and have love, honour—

*Sterl.* But not the stuff, Lovewell!—Add one little round o to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me.—You know I've a regard for you—would do any thing to serve you—any thing on the footing of friendship—but—

*Lov.* If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be assured, that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

*Sterl.* Psha! psha! that's another thing, you know.—Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

*Low.* But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

*Sterl.* Inclinations! why, you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you—eh, Lovewell?

*Low.* I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, sir: but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

*Sterl.* Why, indeed, now if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—No, no—'twill never do—I must hear no more of this—Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

*Low.* [*Hesitating.*] I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise you.

*Sterl.* Why you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

*Low.* Marry her, sir! [*Confused.*]

*Sterl.* Ay, marry her, sir!—I know very well that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much farther towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers or mothers, or uncles or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and



destroy the peace of my family in that manner.—I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

*Lov.* Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir.—Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

*Sterl.* Promise then, that you will carry this matter no farther without my approbation.

*Lov.* You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no further.

*Sterl.* Well—well—that's enough—I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you.—Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense!—What's doing in town? Any news upon 'Change?

*Lov.* Nothing material.

*Sterl.* Have you seen the currants, the soap, and Madeira safe in the warehouses? Have you compared the goods with the invoice and bills of lading, and are they all right?

*Lov.* They are, sir!

*Sterl.* And how are stocks?

*Lov.* Fell one and a half this morning.

*Sterl.* Well, well,—some good news from America, and they'll be up again.—But how are Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvill? When are we to expect them?

*Lov.* Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them.

[*Giving letters.*]

*Sterl.* Let me see—let me see—'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed!—It takes my breath away. [*Opening it.*] And French paper too! with a fine border of flowers and flourishes—and a slip-



perly gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. 'My dear Mr. Sterling.' [*Reading.*] Mercy on me! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise.—But how's this?—Eh!—'with you to night'—[*Reading.*]—'Lawyers to-morrow morning'—To night!—that's sudden, indeed—Where's my sister Heidelberg? she should know of this immediately.—Here, John! Harry! Thomas! [*Calling the servants.*] Hark ye, Lovewell!

*Lov.* Sir.

*Sterl.* Mind now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John—We'll shew your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city—They shall eat gold—and drink gold—and lie in gold.—Here, cook! butler! [*Calling.*] What signifies your birth and education, and titles!—Money, money! that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

*Lov.* Very true, sir.

*Sterl.* True, sir!—Why then, have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business.—Where are these fellows?—John! Thomas! [*Calling.*] Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course.—Ah, Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe.—Slife, man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob.—Where are all my rascals? Here, William!

[*Exit, calling.*]

*Low.* So—as I suspected.—Quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure.—What's best to be done?—Let me see!—Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it: for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices.—Poor Fanny! It hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety.—Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. *[Exit.*

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SCENE II.

*Changes to another apartment. Enter Miss STERLING, and Miss FANNY.*

*Miss Sterl.* Oh, my dear sister, say no more!—This is downright hypocrisy.—You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure.—Well, after all, it is extremely natural—It is impossible to be angry with you.

*Fanny.* Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

*Miss Sterl.* And you really pretend not to envy me?

*Fanny.* Not in the least.

*Miss Sterl.* And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

*Fanny.* No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

*Miss Sterl.* Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—But I had forgot—There's that dear sweet creature Mr. Lovewell in the case.—You would not break your faith with your true love now for the world, I warrant you.

*Fanny.* Mr. Lovewell!—always Mr. Lovewell!—Lord, what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

*Miss Sterl.* Pretty peevish soul!—Oh, my dear grave, romantic sister!—a perfect philosopher in petticoats!—Love and a cottage!—Eh, Fanny—Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!—

*Fanny.* And why not the coach and six without the indifference?—But, pray, when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

*Miss Sterl.* In a day or two—I cannot tell exactly—Oh, my dear sister!—I must mortify her a little. [*Aside.*] I know you have a pretty taste. Pray, give me your opinion of my jewels.—How do you like the stile of this esclavage? [*Shewing jewels.*]

*Fanny.* Extremely handsome, indeed, and well fancied.

*Miss Sterl.* What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds, to one, and Sir John's to the other.—And this pair of ear-rings! set transparent! here, the tops, you see, will take off to wear in a morning, or in an undress—how d'ye like them?

[*Shews jewels.*]

*Fanny.* Very much, I assure you—Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels—you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

*Miss Sterl.* Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear!—I shall be as fine as a little queen, indeed.—I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow—made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts—jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixt—the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life!—The jeweller says, I shall set out with as many diamonds as any body in town, except lady Brilliant, and Polly What d'ye call it, Lord Squander's kept mistress.

*Fanny.* But what are your wedding clothes, sister?

*Miss Sterl.* Oh, white and silver to be sure, you know.—I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

*Fanny.* Fie, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking.

*Miss Sterl.* Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knight's ladies.—Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdasher's Hall—Whilst the civil smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new-cut yew-hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?



*Fanny.* Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much—If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a bye-word in the city—You must never venture on the inside of Temple Bar again.

*Miss Sterl.* Never do I desire it—never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square—far—far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within!—my heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at Court!—gilt chariot!—pyeballed horses!—laced liveries!—and then the whippers buzzing round the circle—‘Who is that young lady! Who is she?’—‘Lady Melvil, ma’am!’—Lady Melvil! My ears tingle at the sound.—And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking—‘Any news upon ‘Change?’—to cry, Well, Sir John! any thing new from Arthur’s?—or—to say to some other woman of quality, Was your Ladyship at the Dutchess of Rubber’s last night?—Did you call in at Lady Thunder’s? In the immensity of crowd I swear I did not see you—scarce a soul at the opera last Saturday—shall I see you at Carlisle House next Thursday!—Oh, the dear Beau Monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

*Fanny.* And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me—no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

*Miss Sterl.* [*Affectedly.*] You?—You’re above pity.—You would not change conditions with me.—You’re over head and ears in love, you know.—



Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say.—He will mind his business—you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family—and once in a season perhaps you'll sit together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing-master's, you know—and perhaps I may meet you in the summer with some other citizens at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations.—You 'sha'nt want my countenance, I assure you.

*Fanny.* Oh, you're too kind, sister!

*Enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG.*

*Mrs. Heidel.* [*At entering.*] Here this evening!—I vow and perjest we shall scarce have time to provide for them—Oh, my dear! [*to Miss Sterl.*] I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-able. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvill will be here to-night.

*Miss Sterl.* To-night, ma'am?

*Mrs. Heidel.* Yes, my dear, to-night.—Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles!—Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lutestring.—Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper? [*Enter Mrs. Trusty.*] Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of quality are expected here this evening?

*Trusty.* Yes, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well—Do you be sure now that every thing is done in the most genteelest manner—and to the honour of the family.

*Trusty.* Yes, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well—but mind what I say to you.

*Trusty.* Yes, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber—d'ye hear?—and Sir John in the blue damask room—his lordship's valet-de-shamb in the opposite——

*Trusty.* But Mr. Lovewell is come down—and you know that's his room, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well—well—Mr. Lovewell may make shift—or get a bed at the George.—But hark ye, *Trusty*!

*Trusty.* Ma'am!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the covers off the couch and the chairs, and put the china figures on the mantle piece immediately.

*Trusty.* Yes, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Be gone then! fly, this instant!—Where's my brother Sterling?

*Trusty.* Talking to the butler, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Very well. [*Exit Trusty.*] Miss Fanny! I pertain I did not see you before—Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

*Fanny.* With me! Nothing, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Bless me! Why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I pertain.—And then you have dress'd yourself as loose and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist—You all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child!—You know the quality

will be here by and by.—Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [*Exit Fanny.*] She is gone away in tears—absolutely crying, I vow and perdest.—This ridiculous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

*Miss Sterl.* Poor soul! she can't help it.

[*Affectedly.*]

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well, my dear! Now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

*Miss Sterl.* Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But, indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Oh fie, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister! What you complain of as coldness and indifference, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address, an exact picture of the manners of quality.

*Miss Sterl.* Oh, he is the very mirror of complaisance! full of formal bows and set speeches!—I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

*Mrs. Heidel.* I say jealous indeed—Jealous of who, pray?

*Miss Sterl.* My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am, and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family?—Between you and your sister, for instance—or me and my 'brother?—Be advised by me, child! It is all politeness and good-breeding. Nobody knows the quality better than I do.

*Miss Sterl.* In my mind the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than Sir John. He is full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizened face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweet-heart.

*Enter STERLING.*

*Sterl.* [*At entering.*] No fish?—Why the pond was dragged but yesterday morning—There's carp and tench in the boat.—Pox on't, if that dog Love-well had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackerell.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

*Sterl.* I warrant you.—But, pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison—and let the gardener cut some pine-apples—and get out some ice.—I'll answer for wine, I warrant you—I'll give them such a glass of Champagne as they never drank in their lives—no, not at a duke's table.



*Mrs. Heidel.* Pray now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of quality. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff; and that will keep you awake—And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laughs. It is monstrous vulgar.

*Sterl.* Never fear, sister!—Who have we here?

*Mrs. Heidel.* It is Monf. Cantoan, the Swiss gentleman, that lives with his lordship, I vow and perdest.

*Enter CANTON.*

*Sterl.* Ah, mounseer! your servant.—I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

*Can.* Mosh oblige to Monf. Sterling.—Ma'am, I am yours—Matemoiselle, I am yours.

[*Bowing round.*]

*Mrs. Heidel.* Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoan!

*Can.* I kiss your hands, matam!

*Sterl.* Well, mounseer!—and what news of your good family!—when are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

*Can.* Monf. Sterling! Milor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melville will be here in one quarter-hour.

*Sterl.* I am glad to hear it.

*Mrs. Heidel.* O, I am prodigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afraid of some accident.—Will you please to have any thing, Mr. Cantoan, after your journey?

*Can.* No, I tank you, ma'am.



*Mrs. Heidel.* Shall I go and shew you the apartments, sir?

*Can.* You do me great honour, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Come then!—come, my dear!

[*To Miss Sterling. Exeunt.*]

*Sterl.* Pox on't, it's almost dark—It will be too late to go round the garden this evening.—However, I will carry them to take a peep at my fine canal at least, I am determined.

ACT II. SCENE I.

*An anti-chamber to Lord OGLEBY's Bed-chamber.*

*Table with Chocolate, and small Case for Medicines.*

*Enter BRUSH, my Lord's Valet-de-chambre, and STERLING's Chambermaid.*

*Brush.*

You shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it.

*Cham.* Nay, pray, sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay indeed.

*Brush.* You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

*Cham.* I seldom drink chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one—if my lord should wake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frighted to death—besides, I have had my tea already this morning—I'm sure I hear my lord.

[*In a fright.*]

*Brush.* No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself—the moment my lord wakes, he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience.

*Cham.* But should he come upon us without ringing—

*Brush.* I'll forgive him if he does—This key [*Takes a phial out of the case.*] locks him up till I please to let him out.

*Cham.* Law! Sir, that's potecary's stuff.

*Brush.* It is so—but without this he can no more get out of bed—than he can read without spectacles—[*Sips.*] What with qualms, age, rheumatisms, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up, to set him a-going for the day.

*Cham.* [*Sips.*] That's prodigious indeed—[*Sips.*] My lord seems quite in a decay.

*Brush.* Yes, he's quite a spectacl [•] [*Sips.*] a mere corpse, till he is reviv'd and refresh'd from our little magazine here—When the restorative pills, and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

*Cham.* [*Sips.*] Poor gentleman! But should the Swish gentleman come upon us. [*Frightened.*]

*Brush.* Why then the English gentleman would be very angry.—No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. [*Sips.*] But I can assure you Monsieur Canton is otherwise employed—He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast—ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup pteaceably—My lord's chocolate is re-

Act II. THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. 29

markably good, he won't touch a drop, but what comes from Italy.

*Cham.* [*Sipping.*] 'Tis very fine indeed! [*Sips.*] and charmingly perfum'd—it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

*Brush.* You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking. [*Takes them out of a drawer in the table.*] and, in return, I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [*Kisses her.*]—A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement agreeable to us both. [*He bows, she curtsies.*]—Your young ladies are fine girls, faith: [*Sips.*] though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclin'd to matrimony, I should take the youngest.

[*Sips.*]

*Cham.* Miss Fanny's the most affablest, and the most best natur'd creter!—

*Brush.* And the eldest a little haughty or so——

*Cham.* More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself—but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know.

[*Sips.*]

*Brush.* By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us—we don't consider tempers—we want money. Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars, ha, ha, ha!

*Cham.* Bless me, here's somebody!—[*Bell rings.*]—Oh, 'tis my lord!—Well, your servant, Mr Brush—I'll clean the cups in the next room.

*Brush.* Do so—but never mind the bell—I sha'n't go this half hour.—Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

*Cham.* Not for the world, Mr. Brush—I'll be here to set all things to rights—But I must not drink tea indeed—and so your servant.

[*Exit with tea-board. Bell rings again.*]

*Brush.* It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the Abigails:—this is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her.—[*Bell rings.*—] And now I'll go to my lord, for I have nothing else to do. [*Going.*]

*Enter CANTON, with Newspapers in his Hand.*

*Can.* Monsieur Brush!—Maitre Brush—my lor stirra yet?

*Brush.* He has just rung his bell—I am going to him. [*Exit.*]

*Can.* Depechez vous donc. [*Puts on his spectacles.*]  
—I wish de deveil had all dese papiers—I forget as fast as I read—de Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre—I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enragé contre moi.—Voyons! [*Reads the paper.*] Here is nothing but Anti-sejanus & advertise—

*Enter Maid with Chocolate things.*

Vat you want, child?—

*Maid.* Only the chocolate things, sir.

*Can.* O, ver well—dat is good girl—and very prit too. *[Exit maid.]*

*Lord Og.* *[Within.]* Canton! he, he!—*[Coughs.]*  
—Canton!—

*Can.* I come, my lor!—vat shall I do?—I have no news—he will make great tintamarre!—

*Lord Og.* *[Within.]* Canton! I say, Canton! Where are you?

*Enter Lord OGLEBY, leaning on BRUSH.*

*Can.* Here, my lor;—I ask pardon, my lor, I have not finish de papiers.——

*Lord Og.* Damn your pardon, and your papiers—I want you here, Canton.

*Can.* Den I run, dat is all. *[Shuffles along. Lord Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.]*

*Lord Og.* You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture—you have the language and the impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen.

*Can.* 'Tis very true, my lor—I cann't help——

*Lord Og.* *[Cries out.]* O Diavolo!

*Can.* You are not in pain, I hope, my lor.

*Lord Og.* Indeed but I am, my lor.—That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew, and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screw'd to my body.

*Can.* A littel veritable eau d'arquibufade vil set all to right again.——



[*Lord Og. sits down, and Brush gives chocolate.*

*Lord Og.* Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

*Brush.* Here, my lord! [*Pouring out.*

*Lord Og.* Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton.

*Can.* A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

*Lord Og.* What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow?

*Can.* Yes, my lor, I have little advertife here vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about nothing at all. La voila! [*Puts on his spectacles.*

*Lord Og.* Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

*Can.* I vil, my lor.—[*Can. reads.*] ‘Dere is no question, but that the Cosmétique Royale vil utterly take away all heats, pimples, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, &c. &c.’—A great deal more, my lor.—‘Be sure to ask for de Cosmétique Royale, signed by the Docteur own hand—Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.’—Eh bien, my lor!

*Lord Og.* Eh bien, Canton!—Will you purchase any?

*Can.* For you, my lor?

*Lord Og.* For me, you old puppy! for what?

*Can.* My lor!

*Lord Og.* Do I want cosmeticks?

*Can.* My lor!

*Lord Og.* Look in my face—come, be sincere.—Does it want the assistance of art?

*Can.* [*With his spectacles.*] En verité non—‘Tis very smoothe and brillian—but tote dat you might take a little by way of prevention.

*Lord Og.* You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do.—The surfeit water, Brush! [*Brush pours out.*]—What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with?—Eh!

*Brush.* Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

*Lord Og.* You are right, Brush.—There is no washing the blackmoor white.—Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars—always taste of the Borachio—and the poor woman his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation!—I think the daughters are tolerable.—Where's my cephalic snuff? [*Brush gives him a box.*]

*Can.* Dey tink so of you, my lor, for dey look at no ting else, ma foi.

*Lord Og.* Did they? Why, I think they did a little.—Where's my glass? [*Brush puts one on the table.*] The youngest is delectable. [*Takes snuff.*]

*Can.* O oui, my lor, vey delect, inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

*Lord Og.* She was particular.—The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother.—Some peppermint water, Brush.—How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook every thing in a marriage contract but their fortune.

*Can.* C'est bien heureux, et commode auffi.

*Lord Og.* Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bed side.—[*Brush goes for it.*] Canton, do you wait in the anti-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

*Can.* Much good may do your lordship.

*Lord Og.* [*To Brush, who brings the pamphlet.*] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [*Exit Brush.*]—What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism? It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [*Gets off his chair.*] He! courage, my lor! by Heavens, I'm another creature. [*Hums and dances a little.*] It will do, faith.—Bravo, my lor! these girls have absolutely inspired me—If they are for a game of romps—Me voila pret! [*Sings and dances.*]—Oh!—that's an ugly twinge—but its gone.—I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. [*Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge; while he's painting himself, a knocking at the door.*] Who's there? I won't be disturb'd.

*Can.* [*Without.*] My lor! my lor! here is Monsieur Sterling to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

*Lord Og.* [*Softly.*] What a fellow!—[*Aloud.*] I am extremely honour'd by Mr. Sterling.—Why don't you see him in, monsieur!—I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. [*Door opens.*] Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

*Enter STERLING and LOVEWELL.*

*Ster.* I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well in the night—I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have—I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them.—His majesty, God bless him, don't sleep upon a better out of his palace; and if I had said in too, I hope no treason, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Your beds are like every thing else about you—incomparable!—They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

*Ster.* What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden. You must see my water by daylight, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flow'ring trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips.—Matters look'd but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe—but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about—I may be laid up to-morrow.

*Lord Og.* I pray Heaven you may! [*Aside.*

*Ster.* What say you, my lord?

*Lord Og.* I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast: Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world, he, he, he!

*Can.* Bravissimo, my lor! ha, ha, he!

*Sterl.* They shall meet your lordship in the garden—we don't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner, and in the evening you shall go the grand tour as I call it, ha, ha, ha!

*Lord Og.* Not a foot, I hope, Mr. Sterling; consider your gout, my good friend—you'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness, he, he, he!

*Can.* Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en vérité!

[*Laughing very heartily.*]

*Sterl.* If my young man [*To Lov.*] here would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

*Lord Og.* What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

*Can.* But when your lordship is out of spirits.

*Lord Og.* Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

*Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.*

Well, sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been fighting and serenading this morning?

*Sir John.* I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

*Lord Og.* I'm sorry to see you so dull, sir—What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! they make love with faces, as if they were burying the dead—though, indeed, a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living—eh, Mr. Sterling?

*Sterl.* Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord—Ha, ha, ha!

*Can.* Dat is all Monsieur Sterling tink of.



*Sir John.* [*Apart.*] Pr'ythee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you; and I must communicate it directly.

*Lov.* [*Apart.*] We'll go together.——If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[*Exeunt Sir John and Lovewell.*]

*Sterl.* My girls are always ready, I make them rise soon and to bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions, and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

*Sterl.* Fine things, indeed, my lord!—Ah, my lord, had not you run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Very pleasant, he, he, he.——

[*Half laughing.*]

*Sterl.* Here's mounseer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out—eating and drinking kills us all.

*Lord Og.* Very pleasant, I protest—What a vulgar dog! [*Aside.*]

*Can.* My lor so old as me!—He is chicken to me—and look like a boy to pauvre me.

*Sterl.* Ha, ha, ha! Well said, mounseer—keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world—Ha, ha, ha!—But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden: we have but a little time to breakfast—I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a lit-

tle walk with you, my lord, and then for the hot rolls and butter! [Exit.]

*Lord Og.* I shall attend you with pleasure—  
Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it—What a strange beast it is!

*Can.* C'est un barbare.

*Lord Og.* He is a vulgar dog, and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly—Come along, monsieur!

[*Exeunt Lord Ogleby and Canton.*]

## SCENE II.

*Changes to the Garden. Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL,  
and LOVEWELL.*

*Love.* In my room this morning? Impossible.

*Sir John.* Before five this morning, I promise you.

*Love.* On what occasion?

*Sir John.* I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you, that I could not sleep in my bed—but I found that you could not sleep neither—The bird was flown, and the nest long since cold.—Where was you, Lovewell?

*Love.* Pooh! pr'ythee! ridiculous!

*Sir John.* Come now, which was it? Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too—or—

*Lov.* Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

*Sir John.* Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

*Lov.* Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

*Sir John.* Walking, yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell.—Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids——

*Lov.* But your business! your business, Sir John!

*Sir John.* Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

*Lov.* Psha!

*Sir John.* Poor Lovewell, he can't bear it, I see. She charged you not to kiss and tell.—Eh, Lovewell! However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine.—What do you think of Miss Sterling?

*Lov.* What do I think of Miss Sterling?

*Sir John.* Ay; what d'ye think of her?

*Lov.* An odd question!—but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

*Sir John.* All mischief and malice, I doubt.

*Lov.* How?

*Sir John.* But her person—what d'ye think of that?

*Lov.* Pretty and agreeable.

*Sir John.* A little grisette thing.

*Lov.* What is the meaning of all this?

*Sir John.* I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that notwithstanding all appearances. [*Seeing*

*Lord Ogleby, &c.]* We are interrupted—When they are gone, I'll explain.

*Enter Lord OGLEBY, STERLING, Mrs. HEIDELBERG, Miss STERLING, and FANNY.*

*Lord Og.* Great improvements, indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bason with Neptune in the middle, are all in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-park Corner.

*Sterl.* The chief pleasure of a country-house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expence, not I.—This is quite another guests sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun—smack-smooth—as you see.—Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brewhouse into a pinery.—The high octagon summer house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East-India captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches and chariots, and chaises, pass and re-pass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle, and so you shall say, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling! for it looks like a cabin in the air.—If flying chairs were in use, the captain

might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

*Can.* Ha, ha, ha, ha!

*Mrs. Heidel.* My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord!—But you'll excuse him.—I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste.—In the evening I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a sullabub warm from the cow.

*Lord Og.* I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg—the very flower of delicacy, and cream of politeness.

*Mrs. Heidel.* O, my lord! [*Leering at Lord Og.*]

*Lord Og.* O, madam! [*Leering at Mrs. Heidel.*]

*Sterl.* How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

*Lord Og.* A most excellent serpentine! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true lover's knot.

*Sterl.* Ay, here's none of your straight lines here—but all taste—zig-zag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord!

*Lord Og.* Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling! one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose any where in these walks.—You are a most excellent oeconomist of your land, and make a little go a great way.—It lies together in as small parcels as if it was placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch-street.

*Can.* Ha, ha, ha, ha!

*Lord Og.* What d'ye laugh at, Canton?



*Can.* Ah! que cette similitude est drole! So clever what you say, mi lor!

*Lord Og.* [*To Fanny.*] You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

*Fanny.* Only making up a nosegay, my lord!—Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it? [*Presenting it.*

*Lord Og.* I'll wear it next my heart, madam!—I see the young creature dotes on me! [*Apart.*

*Miss Sterl.* Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook or the nurse carry to town, on a Monday morning, for a beau-pot.—Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweet-briar?

*Lord Og.* The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy.—A little jealous, poor soul! [*Apart.*

*Sterl.* Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

*Mrs. Heidel.* You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with over-walking, brother!

*Lord Og.* Not at all, madam! We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty.

[*Leering at the woman.*

*Mrs. Heidel.* Quite the man of quality, I perceive.

[*Apart.*

*Can.* Take a my arm, my lor!

[*Lord Ogleby leans on him.*

*Sterl.* I'll only shew his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

*Lord Og.* Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

*Sterl.* Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reckoned very fine ones too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

*Lord Og.* [*Going, stops.*] What steeple's that we see yonder?—the parish church, I suppose.

*Sterl.* Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

*Lord Og.* Very ingenious indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me. [*Leering at the woman.*]—Simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive.—Get away, Canton! [*Pushing away Canton.*] I want no assistance—I'll walk with the ladies.

*Sterl.* This way, my lord!

*Lord Og.* Lead on, sir!—We young folks here, will follow you.—Madam!—Miss Sterling!—Miss Fanny! I attend you.

[*Exit after Sterling, gallanting the ladies.*]

*Can.* [*Following.*] He is cock o'de game, ma foi!

[*Exit.*]

*Sir John.* At length, thank Heaven, I have an opportunity to unbosom.—I know you are faithful,

Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

*Lov.* Be assured you may depend upon me.

*Sir John.* You must know, then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

*Lov.* How!

*Sir John.* It will be no match, Lovewell.

*Lov.* No match?

*Sir John.* No.

*Lov.* You amaze me. What should prevent it?

*Sir John.* I.

*Lov.* You! wherefore?

*Sir John.* I don't like her.

*Lov.* Very plain, indeed! I never supposed that you was extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience, rather than affection.

*Sir John.* Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind—with an unimpassioned indifference ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious, sober love, as a chimæra, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries.—In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

*Lov.* Another! So, so! here will be fine work. And pray, who is she?

*Sir John.* Who is she! who can she be? but Fanny, the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny.

*Lov.* Fanny! What Fanny?

*Sir John.* Fanny Sterling. Her sister—Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

*Lov.* Her sister? Confusion!—You must not think of it, Sir John.

*Sir John.* Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay tell me, Lovewell! was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her?—You seem confounded—Why don't you answer me?

*Lov.* Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern.

*Sir John.* Why so?—Is she not an angel, Lovewell?

*Lov.* I foresee that it must produce the worst consequences. Consider the confusion it must unavoidably create. Let me persuade you to drop these thoughts in time.

*Sir John.* Never—never, Lovewell!

*Lov.* You have gone too far to recede. A negotiation, so nearly concluded, cannot be broken off with any grace. The lawyers, you know, are hourly expected; the preliminaries almost finally settled between Lord Ogleby and Mr. Sterling; and Miss Sterling herself ready to receive you as a husband.

*Sir John.* Why the banns have been published, and nobody has forbidden them, 'tis true. But you know either of the parties may change their minds even after they enter the church.

*Lov.* You think too lightly of this matter. To carry your addressees so far—and then to desert her—and for her sister too!—It will be such an affront to the family, that they can never put up with it.

*Sir John.* I don't think so: for as to my transferring my passion from her to her sister, so much the better! for then you know, I don't carry my affection out of the family.

*Lov.* Nay, but pr'ythee be serious, and think better of it.

*Sir John.* I have thought better of it already, you see. Tell me honestly, Lovewell? Can you blame me? Is there any comparison between them?

*Lov.* As to that now—why that—is just—just as it may strike different people. There are many admirers of Miss Sterling's vivacity.

*Sir John.* Vivacity! a medley of Cheapside pertness, and Whitechapel pride.—No—no, if I do go so far into the city for a wedding dinner, it shall be upon turtle at least.

*Lov.* But I see no probability of success; for granting that Mr. Sterling would have consented to it at first, he cannot listen to it now. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

*Sir John.* Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet, I think I know Mr. Sterling so well, that, strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.



*Lov.* But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addressees.

*Sir John.* You are deceived a little in that particular.

*Lov.* You'll find I am in the right.

*Sir John.* I have some little reason to think otherwise.

*Lov.* You have not declared your passion to her already.

*Sir John.* Yes, I have.

*Lov.* Indeed!—And—and—and how did she receive it?

*Sir John.* I think it is not very easy for me to make my addressees to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement?

*Lov.* Encouragement! did she give you any encouragement?

*Sir John.* I don't know what you call encouragement—but she blushed—and cried—and desired me not to think of it any more:—upon which I prest her hand—kissed it—swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

*Lov.* And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

*Sir John.* Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised—and she got away from me too, before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

*Lov.* I!—a letter!—I had rather have nothing—

*Sir John.* Nay, you promised me your assistance—and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion.—You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

*Lov.* As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

*Sir John.* Well—well—that's my concern—Ha! there she goes, by heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see! I'll go to her immediately.

*Lov.* You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

*Sir John.* I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

*Lov.* Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits.—The shock will be too much for her. [Detaining him.]

*Sir John.* Nothing shall prevent me.—Ha! now she turns into another walk—Let me go! [Breaks from him.] I shall lose her. [Going, turns back.] Be sure now to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you. [Exit hastily.]

*Lov.* 'Sdeath! I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face!—I shall break out before my time.—This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him—I am sure she could not.—Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place?—Leave him to solicit my wife! I

can't submit to it.—They come nearer and nearer  
—If I stay, it will look suspicious—It may be-  
tray us, and incense him—They are here—I  
must go—I am the most unfortunate fellow in the  
world. [Exit.

*Enter FANNY and Sir JOHN.*

*Fanny.* Leave me, Sir John, I beseech you leave  
me! nay, why will you persist to follow me with  
idle solicitations, which are an affront to my cha-  
racter, and an injury to your own honour.

*Sir John.* I know your delicacy, and tremble to  
offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my  
excuse! Consider, madam, that the future happi-  
ness of my life depends on my present application  
to you! consider that this day must determine my  
fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left  
me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to in-  
treat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to  
open to your father.

*Fanny.* For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think  
of your previous engagements! Think of your own  
situation, and think of mine! What have you dis-  
covered in my conduct that might encourage you to  
so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should  
venture to say so much, and blush that I should  
even dare to give it a hearing.—Let me begone!

*Sir John.* Nay, stay, madam, but one moment  
—Your sensibility is too great.—Engage-  
ments! what engagements have been pretended on  
either side more than those of family convenience?  
I went on in the trammels of matrimonial negocia-

tion with a blind submission to your father and Lord Ogleby; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

*Fanny.* Have a care, Sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart, half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

*Sir John.* Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix—But when it is once inviolably attached—inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection.—When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

*Fanny.* You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit; nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment of your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you, in honour to my sister: and be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her. [Going.

*Sir John.* One word, and I have done. [Stopping her.] Your impatience and anxiety, and the urgency of the occasion, oblige me to be brief and explicit with you.—I appeal therefore from your delicacy to your justice.—Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclin-



ed to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united.—— Now, as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you—and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling:—If then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me—if there is no other happier man——

*Fanny.* Hear me, sir, hear my final determination:—Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them;—were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other, I could not listen to your proposals.——What! you on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace; the peace of a whole family; and that of my own too!—Away, away, Sir John!—At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror.——Nay, you must detain me no longer—I will go.

*Sir John.* Do not leave me in absolute despair!—Give me a glimpse of hope!

[*Falling on his knees.*]

*Fanny.* I cannot.—Pray, Sir John!

[*Struggling to go.*]

*Sir John.* Shall this hand be given to another?

[*Kissing her hand.*] No, I cannot endure it.—My



whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

*Enter Miss STERLING.*

*Fanny.* Ha ! my sister is here. Rise, for shame, Sir John.

*Sir John.* Miss Sterling ! *[Rising.]*

*Miss Sterl.* I beg pardon, sir ;—You'll excuse me, madam ! I have broke in upon you a little unopportunely, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotions.

*Sir John.* I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but——

*Miss Sterl.* O dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology——The thing explains itself.

*Sir John.* It will soon, madam.—In the mean time, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions.—And—and—your humble servant, madam ! *[Exit in confusion.]*

*Miss Sterl.* Respect !—Insolence !—Esteem !—Very fine, truly !—And you, madam ! my sweet delicate, innocent, sentimental sister ! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions ?

*Fanny.* Do not upbraid me, my dear sister ! Indeed I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be

more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

*Miss Sterl.* Make me miserable! You are mightily deceived, madam; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you.—A base fellow!—As for you, miss! the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, and envious, and deceitful.

*Fanny.* Indeed you wrong me.

*Miss Sterl.* Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure!—Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his protestations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty?—No, no, my dear! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

*Fanny.* Sir John, I own, is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

*Miss Sterl.* We shall try that, madam.—I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you. [Exit.

*Fanny.* How unhappy I am! my distresses multiply upon me.—Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgression, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace.—Yet, on all events, I am de-

terminated on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary. [Exit.]

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*A Hall. Enter a Servant leading in Serjeant FLOWER, and Counsellors TRAVERSE and TRUEMAN, all booted.*

*Servant.*

THIS way, if you please, gentlemen! my master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

*Flow.* Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

*Serv.* Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

*Flow.* Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Serjeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

*Serv.* I will, sir. [Going.]

*Flow.* And hark'e, young man, [*Servant returns.*] denote my servant—Mr. Serjeant Flower's servant, to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall with my portmanteau.

*Serv.* I will, sir. [Exit.]

*Flow.* Well, gentlemen! the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just

on the eve of the circuits.—Let me see—the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations.—Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

*Trav.* The day after to-morrow.

*Flow.* That is commission-day with us at Warwick too. But my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there the next morning. Besides, I have about half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I will take the evening before me, and then *current calamo*, as I say—eh, Traverse!

*Trav.* True, Mr. Serjeant; and the easiest thing in the world too; for those country attorneys are such ignorant dogs, that in case of the devise of an estate to A, and his heirs for ever, they'll make a query whether he takes in fee or in tail.

*Flow.* Do you expect to have much to do on the Home Circuit these assizes?

*Trav.* Not much *nisi prius* business, but a good deal on the crown side, I believe. The gaols are brim-full, and some of the felons in good circumstances, and likely to be tolerable clients. Let me see! I am engaged for three highway robberies, two murders, one forgery, and half a dozen larcenies, at Kingston.

*Flow.* A pretty decent gaol-delivery!—Do you expect to bring off Darkin, for the robbery on Putney-Common? Can you make out your alibi?

*Trav.* Oh! no! the crown witnesses are sure to prove our identity. We shall certainly be hanged: but that don't signify.—But, Mr. Serjeant, have you much to do?—Any remarkable cause on the Midland this circuit?

*Flow.* Nothing very remarkable—except two rapes, and Rider and Western at Nottingham, for crim. con.—but, on the whole, I believe a good deal of business.—Our associate tells me, there are above thirty *venires* for Warwick.

*Trav.* Pray, Mr. Serjeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas at Lincoln?

*Flow.* I am—for the plaintiff.

*Trav.* And what do you think on't?

*Flow.* A nonsuit.

*Trav.* I thought so.

*Flow.* Oh, no matter of doubt on't—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us—we have but one chance.

*Trav.* What's that?

*Flow.* Why, my Lord Chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

*True.* Ay, that may do indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendants counsel.

*Flow.* True.—Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair?

[*To True.*

*True.* I am, sir—I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire—go the Western circuit—and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.



*Flow.* Ha!—and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

*True.* About nine years and three quarters.

*Flow.* Ha!—I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before.—I wish you success, young gentleman!

*Enter STERLING.*

*Sterl.* Oh, Mr. Serjeant Flower, I am glad to see you—Your servant, Mr. Serjeant! gentlemen, your servant!—Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's-Inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold tight and strong?—Eh, Master Serjeant!

*Flow.* My friend Ferret's slow and sure, fir—But then, *serius aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do.—My clerk has brought the writing and all other instruments along with him, and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth!

*Sterl.* But that damn'd mortgage of 60,000l.—There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope?

*Trav.* I can answer for that, fir—and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's proportion.—You agree, on your part, to come down with 80,000l.

*Sterl.* Down on the nail.—Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow if he pleases—he shall have it in India-bonds, or notes, or how he chooses.—

Your lords and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town stick at payments sometimes——debts unpaid, no credit lost with them——but no fear of us substantial fellows——Eh, Mr. Serjeant!

*Flow.* Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine, and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of 2000*l.* per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate, after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

*Trav.* Very true——and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand——

*Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.*

*Sterl.* Ah, Sir John! Here we are——hard at it——paving the road to matrimony——First the lawyers, then comes the doctor——Let us but dispatch the long-robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

*Sir John.* I am sorry to interrupt you, sir——but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me.——Having something very particular for

your private ear; I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately.

*Sterl.* Ay, with all my heart!—Gentlemen, Mr. Serjeant, you'll excuse it—Business must be done, you know. The writings will be kept cold till to-morrow morning.

*Flow.* I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

*Sterl.* Nay, nay, I sha'n't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you.—My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses.—Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green, with a game of bowls and a cool tankard?—My servants shall attend you.—Do you choose any other refreshment?—Call for what you please; do as you please;—make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you.—Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—*[Follows the lawyers out, bowling and talking, and then returns to Sir John.]* And now, sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, sir John?

*Sir John.* After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

*Sterl.* Uneasiness! what uneasiness?—Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

*Sir John.* Pardon me, sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

*Sterl.* What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

*Sir John.* In one word then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

*Sterl.* How, Sir John! Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What? refuse to—

*Sir John.* Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront, nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

*Sterl.* Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

*Sir John.* True.—But you have another daughter, sir—

*Sterl.* Well!

*Sir John.* Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart: I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it, and if you will but give a sanction to my present address, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

*Sterl.* Mighty fine, truly! Why, what the plague do you make of us, sir John? Do you come to market for my daughter, like servants at a statute-fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the Grand Signior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them; and—

*Sir John.* A moment's patience, sir! Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

*Sterl.* Compensation! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John?

*Sir John.* Come, come, Mr. Sterling; I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man



THE CLAUDESTINE MARRIAGE. ACT III.

of the world: I'll deal frankly with you! and you shall see that I don't desire a change of-measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

*Sterl.* What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

*Sir John.* I'll tell you, fir.—You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

*Sterl.* Well!

*Sir John.* Now if you will but consent to my waving that marriage——

*Sterl.* I agree to your waving that marriage! Impossible, Sir John!

*Sir John.* I hope not, fir; as on my part I will agree to wave my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

*Sterl.* Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

*Sir John.* Yes, fir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

*Sterl.* Fifty thousand—— [Pausing.]

*Sir John.* Instead of fourscore.

*Sterl.* Why—why—there may be something in that——Let me see—Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore.—But how can this be, fir John? For you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my Lord Ogleby; who, I believe, between you and me, Sir John, is not overstocked with ready money at present; and three-score thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present incumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

*Sir John.* That objection is easily obviated.—Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own.—Ten thousand pounds, therefore, I shall be able to pay you immediately; and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

*Sterl.* Why—to do you justice, sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family——

*Sir John.* Nothing was ever farther from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling.—And after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary—such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

*Sterl.* True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

*Sir John.* The very thing!

*Sterl.* Odsso! I had quite forgot.—We are reckoning without our host here.—There is another difficulty——

*Sir John.* You alarm me. What can that be?

*Sterl.* I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister Heidelberg.—The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

*Sir John.* But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent——

*Sterl.* I don't know that—Betsey is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first, and by that time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

*Sir John.* I'll fly to her immediately; you promise me your assistance?

*Sterl.* I do.

*Sir John.* Ten thousand thanks for it! and now success attend me! [Going.]

*Sterl.* Hark'e, Sir John! [*Sir John returns.*] Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, Sir John.

*Sir John.* Oh, I am dumb, I am dumb, sir. [Going.]

*Sterl.* You'll remember it is thirty thousand.

*Sir John.* To be sure I do.

*Sterl.* But, sir John!—one thing more. [*Sir John returns.*] My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

*Sir John.* Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone! [Offering to go.]

*Sterl.* [*Holding him.*] And when every thing is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

*Sir John.* To be sure. A bond by all means! a bond or whatever you please. [*Exit hastily.*]

*Sterl.* I should have thought of more conditions—he's in a humour to give me every thing—Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality; that cry for a plaything one minute, and throw it by the next! as changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it was a china orange. By this mortgage, I shall have a hold on his *terra firma*; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will,—let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net for the benefit of my family.—Well, thus it is, that the children of citizens, who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion, who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

*Changes to another Apartment. Enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG, and Miss STERLING.*

*Miss Sterl.* This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny for you!

*Mrs. Heidel.* My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

*Miss Sterl.* O ay; she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

*Miss Sterl.* And then she's so mighty good to servants—'pray, John, do this,—pray, Tom, do that—thank you, Jenny:' and then so humble to her relations—'to be sure, papa!—as my aunt pleases—my sister knows best.'—But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

*Mrs. Heidel.* She Lady Melvil! Compose yourself, niece! I'll ladyship her indeed: a little creppin, cantin—She sha'n't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this



intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

*Miss Sterl.* There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealing into corners to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but, behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

*Mrs. Heidel.* My spirit to a T.—My dear child! [*Kisses her.*]—Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of Parliament, because I would not demean myself to be flobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and greasy butchers and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help differing a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experience and sagacity makes me still suspect, that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too: But Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another guess-sort of a figure; and were as perfect a picture of two distressed lovers, as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

*Miss Sterl.* Matter of fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John

kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter of fact? and did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyers, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister—Oh, that some other person, an earl, or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Be cool, child! you shall be Lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

*Miss Sterl.* As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. [*Disordered.*]

*Mrs. Heidel.* Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child; I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by and by I'll come and let you know all that has past between us.

*Miss Sterl.* Pray do, madam.—[*Looking back.*]  
—A vile wretch! [*Exit in a rage.*]

*Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.*

*Sir John.* Your most obedient humble servant, madam. [*Bowing very respectfully.*]

*Mrs. Heidel.* Your servant, Sir John.

[*Dropping a half curtsy, and pouting:*]

*Sir John.* Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of

your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what pass this morning.

*Mrs. Heidel.* I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with any thing that should induce me to change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of quality. [Pouting.]

*Sir John.* It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh all circumstances, I flatter myself——

*Mrs. Heidel.* You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John.—And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John. [Warmly.]

*Sir John.* I would not offend you for the world, madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements, which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

*Mrs. Heidel.* I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister, and the whole family must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. ACT III.

*Sir John.* Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam. Here hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself, and Mr. Sterling.

*Enter STERLING behind.*

And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Indeed!

*Sir John.* Quite certain, madam.

*Sterl. [Behind.]* So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

*Mrs. Heidel.* To marry Fanny?

*[Sterling advances by degrees.]*

*Sir John.* Yes, madam.

*Mrs. Heidel.* My brother has given his consent, you say?

*Sir John.* In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. *[Sees Sterling.]*—Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

*Mrs. Heidel.* What! have you consented to give up your own daughter in this manner, brother?

*Sterl.* Give her up! no, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—Zounds, I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John. *[Apart to Sir John.]*

*Mrs. Heidel.* Yes, yes. I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plotting and caballing against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair?

*Sir John.* I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

*Mrs. Heidel.* No, I warrant you. I thought so.—And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted 'till the last.

*Sterl.* What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fie for shame, sir John.

*Sir John.* Nay, but Mr. Sterling——

*Mrs. Heidel.* We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter, 'till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your quality, Sir John.—And as for you, brother——

*Sterl.* Nay, nay, but hear me, sister.

*Mrs. Heidel.* I am perfectly ashamed of you.—Have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honour of our fammaly than to consent——

*Sterl.* Consent! I consent! as I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent.——Did I consent, Sir John?

*Sir John.* Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation——

*Sterl.* Ay, I grant you, if my sister approved.—But that's quite another thing, you know——

[To Mrs. Heidel.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Your sister approve, indeed!——I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling!——

What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the



younger?—I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

*Sterl.* I tell you, I never did listen to it.—Did not I say, that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John?—And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny——

*Mrs. Heidel.* I agree to his marrying Fanny!—abominable!—The man is absolutely out of his senses.—Cann't that wise head of yours foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune?—No!—After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest?—No!—Does not this overturn the whole system of the family?—Yes, yes, yes!—You know I was always for my niece Betsey's marrying a person of the very first quality. That was my maxum:—and, therefore, much the largest settlement was, of course, to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common-council-man for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

*Sir John.* But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, madam?

*Mrs. Heidel.* What, at the expence of her elder sister! O fie, Sir John! How could you bear to hear such an indignity, brother Sterling?

*Sterl.* I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you.—I can't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

*Mrs. Heidel.* But you have heard of it, brother Sterling.—You know you have; and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah! if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

*Sterl.* Did I, Sir John?—Nay, speak!—Bring me off, or we are ruined. [*Apart to Sir John.*

*Sir John.* Why, to be sure to speak the truth—

*Mrs. Heidel.* To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if every thing is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years.—I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderpracken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own fammaly shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you. [*Exit.*

*Sterl.* I thought so. I knew she never would agree to it.

*Sir John.* 'Sdeath how unfortunate! What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

*Sterl.* Nothing.

*Sir John.* What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

*Sterl.* It can't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us,—My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man;

and died worth a plumb at least; a plumb! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plumb and a half.

*Sir John.* Well; but if I——

*Sterl.* And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents, and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

*Sir John.* I can only say, fir——

*Sterl.* Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

*Sir John.* Nay, but I am even willing to——

*Sterl.* Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

*Sir John.* But is there no way, do you think, of prevailing on Mrs. Heidelberg to grant her consent?

*Sterl.* I am afraid not.—However, when her passion is a little abated—for she's very passionate—you may try what can be done: but you must not use my name any more, Sir John.

*Sir John.* Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

*Sterl.* I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

*Sir John.* I'll apply to him this very day.—And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

*Sterl.* Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, Sir John. [Exit.]

*Sir John.* What a situation am I in!—Breaking off with her whom I was bound by treaty to marry; rejected by the object of my affections; and embroiled with this turbulent woman, who governs the whole family.—And yet opposition, instead of smothering, increases my inclination. I must have her. I'll apply immediately to Lord Ogleby; and if he can but bring over the aunt to our party, her influence will overcome the scruples and delicacy of my dear Fanny, and I shall be the happiest of mankind. [Exit.]

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ACT IV. SCENE I.

*A Room. Enter Mr. STERLING, Mrs. HEIDELBERG, and Miss STERLING.*

*Sterling.*

WHAT! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

*Mrs. Heidel.* To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

*Sterl.* Indeed!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Positively.

*Sterl.* But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother.—This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

*Sterl.* I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsey.

*Miss Sterl.* No, indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not.—For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say any thing to hurt her with you or my aunt for the world.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Hold your tongue, Betsey; I will have my way.—When she is packed off, every thing will go on as it should do.—Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the purluminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

*Sterl.* Well, but sister——

*Mrs. Heidel.* It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will.—Come along, child. [*To Miss Sterling.*]—The post-chay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why, I will—and so there's an end of the matter. [*Bounces out with Miss Sterling; then returns.*] One word more, brother Sterling.—I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby, of Sir John Melvil's behaviour.—Do this, brother;—show a proper regard for the honour of your family yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the



raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind. So act as you please, and take the consequences. *[Exit.]*

*Sterl.* The devil's in the women for tyranny!—Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us.—As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—'I will do this,' and 'you shall do that,' and 'you shall do t'other,—or else the family sha'n't have a farden of'—*[Mimicking.]*—So absolute with her money!—But, to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.

*Changes to the Garden. Enter Lord OGLEBY, and CANTON.*

*Lord Og.* What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away!—Why?—Wherefore?—What's the meaning of all this?

*Can.* Je ne sçais pas—I know nothing of it.

*Lord Og.* It can't be—it sha'n't be:—I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should leave us.—Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of 'Change-alley'—the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, for ever shewing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without

her, would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing: Isn't she, Canton?

*Can.* Dere is very good sympatie entre vous, and dat young lady, mi lor.

*Lord Og.* I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals, your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs—if she goes, I'll positively go too.

*Can.* In de same post-chay, my lor? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neither too—ha, ha, ha!

*Lord Og.* Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Cant. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires!—My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects—I fly as naturally to a fine girl—

*Can.* As de fine girl to you, my lor, ha, ha, ha! you alway fly togedre like un pair de pigeons—

*Lord Og.* Like un pair de pigeons—[*Mocks him.*]—Vous etes un sot, Monf. Canton—Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never seest me badiner, but you suspect mischief, you old fool, you.

*Can.* I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, my lor, he, he, he!

*Lord Og.* He, he, he!—Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee here, [*Takes out his box.*] a most ridiculous superfluity, but a pinch of thee now and then is a more delicious treat.

*Can.* You do me great honeur, mi lor.

*Lord Og.* 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medi-

cine against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha!

*Can.* Your flatterie, my lor, vil make me too prode.

*Lord Og.* The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but pr'ythee, *Cant.* is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

*Can.* [*Looking with a glass.*] En verité, 'tis she, my lor——'tis one of de pigeons——de pigeons d'amour.

*Lord Og.* Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.  
[*Smiling.*]

*Can.* I am monkee, I am ole, but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

*Lord Og.* Taisez-vous bête!

*Can.* Elle vous attend, my lor.—She vil make a love to you.

*Lord Og.* Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl! can't oblige me more—Egad, I find myself a little enjoué—Come along, *Cant.*! she is but in the next walk—but there is such a deal of this damned crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them—Allons, Monf. Canton, allons, done!

[*Exeunt, singing in French.*]

*Another Part of the Garden. LOVEWELL and*

*FANNY.*

*Low.* My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress! it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

*Fanny.* But how can it be effected before my departure?

*Lov.* I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do any thing to recommend himself to a lady.—Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

*Fanny.* Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

*Lov.* I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnut-tree by the parlour-door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately.

*Fanny.* Dreadful as the task is, I'll do it.—Any thing is better than this continual anxiety.

*Lov.* By that time the discovery is made, I will appear to second you.—Ha! here comes my lord.—Now my dear Fanny, summon up all your spirits, plead our cause powerfully, and be sure of success.——

[*Going.*

*Fanny.* Ah, don't leave me!

*Lov.* Nay, you must let me.

*Fanny.* Well, since it must be so, I'll obey you, if I have the power. Oh, Lovewell!

*Lov.* Consider, our situation is very critical. Tomorrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another.—He approaches—I must retire.—Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy!

[*Exit.*

*Fanny.* Good Heaven! what a situation am I in! what shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

*Enter Lord OGLEBY, and CANTON.*

*Lord Og.* To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broke in upon your reverie for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam: for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

*Can.* Noting at all, indeed.

*Fanny.* Your lordship does me great honour.—I had a favour to request, my lord!

*Lord Og.* A favour, madam!—To be honoured with your commands, is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

*Fanny.* If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What is the matter with me?

[*Aside.*

*Lord Og.* The girl's confused—He!—here's something in the wind, faith—I'll have a tete-à-tete with her—Allez vous en!

[*To Canton.*



*Can.* I go—Ah, pauvre Mademoiselle ! my lor, have pitié upon the poor pigeone !

*Lord Og.* I'll knock you down, Cant. if you're impertinent. [*Smiling.*]

*Can.* Den I mus away.—[*Shuffles along.*]—You are mosh please, for all dat. [*Aside, and exit.*]

*Fanny.* I shall sink with apprehension. [*Aside.*]

*Lord Og.* What a sweet girl—she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family.

*Fanny.* My lord ! I—— [*She curtsies, and blushes.*]

*Lord Og.* [*Addressing her.*] I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have this moment the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue, what my eyes perhaps have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally—the humblest of your servants.

*Fanny.* I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me ; but it distresses me, that I am obliged in my present situation to apply to it for protection.

*Lord Og.* I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to shew my zeal. Beauty to me is a religion in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr.—I'm in tolerable spirits, faith ! [*Aside.*]

*Fanny.* There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments, are struggling in my bosom ; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

*Lord Og.* Does it, madam—Venus forbid!—My old faults; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. [*Aside, and smiling.*] Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain.—You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—My heart, madam—I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy.—By my honour, I am.

*Fanny.* Then I will venture to unburthen my mind—Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

*Lord Og.* How, madam! Has Sir John made his addresses to you?

*Fanny.* He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say, that my duty to my father, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship, [*Cursing.*] made me shudder at his addresses.

*Lord Og.* Charming girl!—Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed!

*Fanny.* In a moment—give me leave, my lord!—But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure—

*Lord Og.* Impossible, by all the tender powers!—Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

*Fanny.* Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—  
as—as—

[*Hesitating.*]

*Lord Og.* As what, madam?

*Fanny.* As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

*Lord Og.* If this is not plain, the devil's in it—  
[*Aside.*] But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where—Tell me—

*Enter CANTON hastily.*

*Can.* My lor, my lor, my lor!

*Lord Og.* Damn your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical melting moment that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

*Can.* I demande pardonne, my lor! Sir John Melvil, my lor, sent me to beg you do him de honneur to speak a little to your lordship.

*Lord Og.* I'm not at leisure—I am busy—Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll—

*Can.* Fort bien, my lor.

[*Canton goes out on tiptoe.*]

*Lord Og.* By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

*Fanny.* The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burthen.

*Lord Og.* What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. [*Aside.*] I presume, madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption) that——

*Fanny.* Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend——

*Lord Og.* Upon me, madam?

*Fanny.* Upon you, my lord. [*Sighs.*]

*Lord Og.* There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me. [*Sighs.*]

*Fanny.* And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed——

*Lord Og.* [*Taking her hand.*] Thou amiable creature, command my heart for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

*Fanny.* I cannot, my lord; indeed I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me.

[*Exit in tears.*]

*Lord Og.* How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much—I can't bear it—I must give way to this amiable weakness. [*Wipes his eyes.*] My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. [*Stifles a tear.*] How blind have I been to the desolation I have made! How could I possibly imagine that a little partial attention and tender civilities to this young creature should have gathered to this burst of passion! Can I

be a man and withstand it? No—I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby House to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too! What mischief's in the wind now?

*Enter Mr. STERLING, and Miss STERLING.*

*Sterl.* My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsey.

*Lord Og.* Your eyes, Miss Sterling; for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

*Miss Sterl.* I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord!

*Lord Og.* I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostacy. Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

*Miss. Sterl.* Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

*Lord Og.* Nay, now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny, but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed. [*Conceitedly.*]



ACT IV. THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. 87

*Miss Sterl.* Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord; for I have great reason to think that her seeming attachment to him, is by his consent, made use of as a blind to cover her designs upon Sir John.

*Lord Og.* Lovewell! No, poor lad! She does not think of him. [Smiling.]

*Miss Sterl.* Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious!—It is too much!—She has been beforehand with me, I perceive. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that some way or other I will have revenge. [Exit.]

*Sterl.* This is foolish work, my lord!.

*Lord Og.* I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

*Sterl.* It is touching, indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

*Lord Og.* To be sure, sir! You must be distressed beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business.

*Sterl.* With all my heart, my lord!

*Lord Og.* You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

*Sterl.* And I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

*Sterl.* 'Tis my only wish at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

*Lord Og.* Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

*Sterl.* Shall they, my lord ! but how—how ?

*Lord Og.* I'll marry in your family.

*Sterl.* What ! my sister Heidelberg ?

*Lord Og.* You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister ; but your daughter.

*Sterl.* My daughter !

*Lord Og.* Fanny ! now the murder's out !

*Sterl.* What you my lord !

*Lord Og.* Yes ; I, I, Mr. Sterling !

*Sterl.* No, no, my lord ; that's too much.

[Smiling]

*Lord Og.* Too much ! I don't comprehend you.

*Sterl.* What, you, my lord, marry my Fanny ! Bless me, what will the folks say ?

*Lord Og.* Why, what will they say ?

*Sterl.* That you're a bold man my lord ; that's all.

*Lord Og.* Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit for aught I know. Do you court my alliance ?

*Sterl.* To be sure, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Then I'll explain—My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter ; nor I neither.—Your youngest daughter won't marry him ; I will marry your youngest daughter.

*Sterl.* What ! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord ?

*Lord Og.* With any fortune, or no fortune at all, sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the dæmon interest sinks before him. So, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter ; your youngest daughter will marry me.

*Sterl.* Who told you so, my lord?

*Lord Og.* Her own sweet self, sir.

*Sterl.* Indeed?

*Lord Og.* Yes, sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble; your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings; and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

*Sterl.* But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

*Lord Og.* I'll manage that matter; nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

*Sterl.* Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

*Lord Og.* I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos! the lawyers are in the house. I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

*Sterl.* Very well! and I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want, and I shall leave you to manage matters with my sister. You must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say? [Exit.]

*Lord Og.* What a fellow am I going to make a father of? He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse—But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

*Enter LOVEWELL, hastily.*

*Lov.* I beg your lordship's pardon, my lord; are you alone, my lord?

*Lord Og.* No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company, the best company.

*Lov.* My lord!

*Lord Og.* I never was in such exquisite enchanting company since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted pleasure.

*Lov.* Where are they, my lord? [*Looking about.*]

*Lord Og.* In my mind, sir.

*Lov.* What company have you there, my lord?

[*Smiling.*]

*Lord Og.* My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstasy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

*Lov.* I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

*Lord Og.* You shall rejoice at it, sir; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

*Lov.* Shall I, my lord:—then I understand you, you have heard: Miss Fanny has informed you—

*Lord Og.* She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy; 'tis determin'd.

*Lov.* Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

*Lord Og.* O yes, poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—Fate and necessity.

*Lov.* It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

*Lord Og.* And so it did the poor girl, faith.

*Lov.* She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections?

*Lord Og.* The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

*Lov.* [*Bowing.*] You are too good, my lord.—And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

*Lord Og.* From my very soul, Lovewell.

*Lov.* Your generosity overpowers me. [*Bowing.*] I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

*Lord Og.* More fool you then.

*Who pleads her cause with never failing beauty,  
Here finds a full redress.* [*Strikes his breast.*]  
She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

*Lov.* Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding—

*Lord Og.* Her choice convinces me of that.

*Lov.* [*Bowing.*] That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

*Lord Og.* No, no; not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

*Lov.* Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person—

*Lord Og.* I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it



not for the cold unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

*Lov.* My lord!

*Lord Og.* I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman.

*Lov.* Marry her!—What do you mean, my lord?

*Lord Og.* Miss Fanny Sterling that is; the Countess of Ogleby that shall be.

*Lov.* I am astonished!

*Lord Og.* Why, could you expect less from me?

*Lov.* I did not expect this, my lord.

*Lord Og.* Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

*Lov.* No, indeed, my lord. [Sighs.]

*Lord Og.* The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures—I never do any thing by halves; do I, Lovewell?

*Lov.* No, indeed, my lord. [Sighs.] What an accident!

*Lord Og.* What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

*Lov.* O, I do, my lord. [Sighs.]

*Lord Og.* She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

*Lov.* But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

*Lord Og.* No, sir, I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

*Lov.* But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

*Lord Og.* Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

*Lov.* Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

*Lord Og.* Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

*Lov.* But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord?

*Lord Og.* What's that to you?—You may have her if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city-philosophy, to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations! Eh, Lovewell?

*Lov.* But, my lord, that is not the question.

*Lord Og.* Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer.—I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

*Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.*

What news with you, Sir John?—You look all hurry and impatience—like a messenger after a battle.

*Sir John.* After a battle, indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement, and wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

*Lord Og.* To the business then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing—eh, Lovewell?

[*He smiles, and Lovewell bows.*]

*Sir John.* I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

*Lord Og.* Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—sha'n't I, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and Lovewell bows.*]

*Sir John.* Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you, that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

*Lord Og.* I am not at all surprised at it—she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine—Any thing more?

*Sir John.* But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

*Lord Og.* O yes; by all means—have you any hopes there, nephew?—Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and winks at Lovewell.*]

*Lov.* I think not, my lord. [Gravely.]

*Lord Og.* I think so too; but let the fool try.

*Sir John.* Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

*Lord Og.* Mrs. Heidelberg?—Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble: won't it, Lovewell? [*Smiles.*] But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me: won't it, Lovewell? [*Concededly.*] Why don't you laugh at him?

*Lov.* I do, my lord. [Forces a smile.]

*Sir John.* And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

*Lord Og.* I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

*Sir John.* Your generosity transports me.

*Lord Og.* Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town. [*Aside.*]

*Sir John.* And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

*Lord Og.* Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the *sera nature*—lawful game—and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them;—Lovewell as well as you, and I as well as either of you.—Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you, kinsmen?

*Sir John.* You have made me happy, my lord.

*Lov.* And me, I assure you, my lord.

*Lord Og.* And I am superlatively so—*allons donc!*—to horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—*suivons l'amour.* [*Sings.*]

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

FANNY'S Apartment. Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY,  
followed by BETTY.

*Fanny.*

WHY did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

*Betty.* My mistress is right, Sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

*Lov.* But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

*Betty.* I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

*Fanny.* I do expect the worst.—Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear any body in the gallery; and let us know directly.

*Betty.* I warrant you, madam—the lord bless you both! [Exit.]

*Fanny.* What did my father want with you this evening?

*Lov.* He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

*Fanny.* And why did you not obey him?

*Lov.* Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account—but as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.



*Fanny.* Hark!—hark! blefs me, how I tremble!—I feel the terrors of guilt—indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me.

*Lov.* And for me too, my sweet Fanny. Your apprehensions make a coward of me.—But what can alarm you? your aunt and fister are in their chambers, and you have nothing to fear from the rest of the family.

*Fanny.* I fear every body, and every thing, and every moment—My mind is in continual agitation and dread; indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this situation may have very unhappy consequences. [*Weeps.*]

*Lov.* But it sha'n't—I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risque of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity.—What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean, and in such case, the meanest consideration—of our fortune!—Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secrecy of our marriage, but for your sake; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

*Fanny.* Hush! hush! for Heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell, don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence! you will be heard, and we shall be discovered.—I am satisfied—indeed I am—Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this

what you will.—My mind's at peace—indeed it is—think no more of it, if you love me!

*Lov.* That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience; it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment.

*[Kisses her.]*

*Re-enter BETTY.*

*Betty.* *[In a low voice.]* I'm sorry to disturb you.

*Fanny.* Ha! what's the matter?

*Lov.* Have you heard any body?

*Betty.* Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken—if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary!

*Fanny.* Pr'ythee, don't prate now, Betty!

*Lov.* What did you hear?

*Betty.* I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap——

*Lov.* A nap!

*Betty.* Yes, sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the ear-ach from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

*Fanny.* Well—well—and so——

*Betty.* And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too——and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise——

*[Makes an indistinct sort of noise like speaking.]*

*Fanny.* Well, and what did they say?

*Betty.* O! I could not understand a word of what was said.

*Lov.* The outward door is lock'd?

*Betty.* Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst.

*Fanny.* Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

*Betty.* And I did it on purpose, madam, and cough'd a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice—when I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

*Fanny.* What shall we do?

*Lov.* Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon—but Betty might fancy this noise—she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

*Betty.* I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters—I'm sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

*Fanny.* He compliments you, don't be a fool!—Now you have set her tongue a running, she'll mutter for an hour. [*To Lovewell.*] I'll go and hearken myself. [*Exit.*]

*Betty.* I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service. [*Half aside and muttering.*]

*Lov.* Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

*Betty.* I am not mercenary neither—I can live on a little, with a good carter.

*Re-enter FANNY.*

*Fanny.* All seems quiet—suppose, my dear, you go to your own room—I shall be much easier then—and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

*Betty.* You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret.

*[Half aside and muttering.]*

*Lov.* Should I leave you now, if they still are upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

*Betty.* Shall I, madam?

*Fanny.* Do! let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after. I would not have you surpris'd here for the world. Pray leave me! I shall be quite myself again, if you will oblige me.

*Lov.* I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. *[Going.]*

*Fanny.* Let us listen first at the door, that you may not be intercepted. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her——

*Betty.* They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. *[Going hastily.]*

*Fanny.* Softly—softly—Betty! don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

*Lov.* But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

*[Exeunt all softly.]*

SCENE II.

*Changes to a Gallery, which leads to several Bed-chambers. Enter Miss STERLING, leading Mrs. HEIDELBERG in a Night-cap.*

*Miss Sterl.* This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Nay, but niece—consider a little—don't drag me out in this figure; let me put on my fly-cap!—if any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors at law, should be stirring, I should be perdidus disconcerted.

*Miss Sterl.* But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well, but softly, Betsey!—you are all in emotion—your mind is too much flustrated—you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natural rest—compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warysome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

*Miss Sterl.* We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if any body, it is my sister; my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change broker; so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had



better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister, the will of the best of aunts, and the weakness of a too interested father.

*[She pretends to be bursting into tears all this speech.]*

*Mrs. Heidel.* Don't, Betsey—keep up your spirit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every particular—but be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered?

*Miss Sterl.* I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my *Machiavel* sister would not rest till she had broke my heart:—I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward; she immediately came back and told me that they were in high consultation; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conduct Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

*Mrs. Heidel.* And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

*Miss Sterl.* I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before morning, if we don't prevent them.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband (that is to be) lock'd up in her chamber! at night too!—I tremble at the thoughts!

*Miss Sterk.* Hush, madam! I hear something.

*Mrs. Heidel.* You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this fig for the world.

*Miss Sterk.* 'Tis dark, madam; you can't be seen.

*Mrs. Heidel.* I perceive there's a candle coming, and a man too!

*Miss Sterk.* Nothing but servants; let us retire a moment! [They retire.]

*Enter BRUSH, half drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a Candle in her Hand.*

*Cham.* Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror!

*Brush.* But my sweet, and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason! that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

*Cham.* But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too: pray let me go; I am ruined if they hear you; I tremble like an asp.

*Brush.* But they sha'n't hear us; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you! therefore I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason!

*Cham.* I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see, and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

*Brush.* Nothing, by Heavens, but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid; I am a little electri-

fied, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink Port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it oversets a claret-drinker.

*Cham.* Don't be rude! blefs me!—I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

*Brush.* I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable.

*Cham.* You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out, if you don't let me go. That is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's.

*Brush.* And that my Lord Ogleby's, and that my Lady What-d'ye-call-'em; I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that too.

*Cham.* More shame for you, Mr. Brush!—you terrify me—you have no modesty.

*Brush.* O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher!—for instance; I reverence Miss Fanny—she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince.—With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself—but for her sister—

*Miss Sterl.* There, there, madam, all in a story!

*Cham.* Blefs me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something!

*Brush.* Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon—If it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two damn'd things at once.

*Cham.* Law! law! how you blaspheme!—we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

*Brush.* No, no, it will last our time—but as I was saying, the eldest sister—Miss Jezebel—

*Cham.* Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

*Brush.* No—we have smoaked her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us—no, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

*Cham.* You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

*Brush.* Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

*Mrs. Heidel.* [*Coming forward.*] There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

*Cham.* Ha! I am undone!

*Brush.* Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous. [*Runs off.*]

*Miss Sterl.* A fine discourse you have had with that fellow!

*Mrs. Heidel.* And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

*Miss Sterl.* What have you to say for yourself?

*Cham.* I can say nothing.—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed—but indeed I am virtuous—I am virtuous, indeed.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well, well—don't tremble so; but, tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

*Miss Sterl.* We'll forgive you, if you'll discover all.

*Cham.* Why, madam—don't let me betray my fellow servants—I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Then you shall sleep some where else to-morrow night.

*Cham.* O dear! what shall I do!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

*Cham.* Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry—Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of a holiday night of it.

*Miss Sterl.* Holiday! for what?

*Cham.* Nay, I only made one.

*Miss Sterl.* Well, well; but upon what account?

*Cham.* Because, as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

*Miss Sterl.* And so you make a holiday for that—Very fine!

*Cham.* I did not make it, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

*Cham.* No, indeed, ma'am!

*Miss Sterl.* Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

*Cham.* No, as I hope for mercy, ma'am.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Well, I'll put an end to all this directly—do you run to my brother Sterling—

*Cham.* Now, ma'am!—'Tis so very late, ma'am—

*Mrs. Heidel.* I don't care how late it is. Tell



him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately—go, I say.

*Cham.* I will, I will, though I'm frighten'd out of my wits. *[Exit.]*

*Mrs. Heidel.* Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order, to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counter-plot 'em too.

*[Exit into her chamber.]*

*Miss Sterl.* I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess.—Ha! they are unlocking the door.—Now for it! *[Rings.]*

*FANNY'S Door is unlock'd, and BETTY comes out with a candle. Miss STERLING approaches her.*

*Betty.* *[Calling within.]* Sir! sir!—now's your time—all's clear. *[Seeing Miss Sterl.]* Stay, stay—not yet—we are watch'd.

*Miss Sterl.* And so you are, Madam Betty. *[Miss Sterl. lays hold of her, while Betty locks the door, and puts the key in her pocket.]*

*Betty.* *[Turning round.]* What's the matter, madam?

*Miss Sterl.* Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

*Betty.* I am no tell-tale, madam, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me.

*Miss Sterl.* You have a great deal of courage, Betty; and considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

*Betty.* My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

*Enter Mr. STERLING.*

*Sterl.* What's all this? what's the matter? Why am I disturb'd in this manner?

*Miss Sterl.* This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain the matter.

*Re-enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG, with another head-dress.*

*Mrs. Heidel.* Now I'm prepar'd for the rencounter.—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

*Sterl.* Not I—but what is it? speak.—I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak: and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

*Mrs. Heidel.* No, no, there's no rape, brother!—all parties are willing, I believe.

*Miss Sterl.* Who's in that chamber?

*[Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.]*

*Betty.* My mistress.

*Miss Sterl.* And who's with your mistress?

*Betty.* Why, who should there be?

*Miss Sterl.* Open the door then, and let us see.

*Betty.* The door is open, madam, *[Miss Sterl. goes to the door.]* I'll sooner die than peach.

*[Exit hastily.]*

*Miss Sterl.* The door is lock'd; and she has got the key in her pocket.

*Mrs. Heidel.* There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

*Sterl.* But, zounds! what is all this about! You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber—There is the particular.

*Sterl.* The devil he is!—That's bad.

*Miss Sterl.* And he has been there some time too.

*Sterl.* Ditto!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Ditto! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

*Sterl.* By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister!—the best way is to insure privately—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

*Miss Sterl.* Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience!—You have thrown away all your affection; and I shall do as much by my obedience; unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it.—Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world: but the deriders shall be derided; and so—help! help, there! thieves! thieves!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Tit-for-tat, Betsey! you are right, my girl.

*Sterl.* Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—the devil's in the girl.

*Mrs. Heidel.* No, no; the devil's in you, brother; I am ashamed of your principles.—What! would

you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! thieves! thieves, I say! *[Cries out.]*

*Sterl.* Sister, I beg you!—daughter, I command you!—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves!—we shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

*Miss Sterl.* What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph! I have a spirit above such mean considerations; and to shew you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar 'Change-alley spirit—help! help! thieves! thieves! thieves! I say!

*Sterl.* Ay, ay, you may save your lungs—the house is in an uproar; women at best have no discretion; but in a passion they'll fire a house, or burn themselves in it, rather than not be revenged.

*Enter CANTON, in a night-gown and slippers.*

*Can.* Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tantamarre?

*Sterl.* Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

*Lord Og.* *[Calls within.]* Brush! Brush!—Canton! where are you?—What's the matter? *[Rings a bell.]* Where are you?

*Sterl.* 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

*Can.* I com, my lor!— *[Exit Canton.]*

*[Lord Ogleby still rings.]*

*Serj. Flaw.* *[Calls within.]* A light! a light here!—where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

*Sterl.* Lights here! lights for the gentlemen!

*[Exit Sterling.]*

*Mrs. Heidel.* My brother feels, I see—your sister's turn will come next.

*Miss Sterl.* Ay, ay, let it go round, madam, it is the only comfort I have left.

*Re-enter STERLING, with lights, before Serjeant FLOWER, with one boot and a slipper, and TRAVERSE.*

*Sterl.* This way, sir! this way, gentlemen!

*Flow.* Well; but Mr. Sterling, no danger I hope. Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit-time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

*Trav.* No danger, Mr. Sterling,—no trespass, I hope?

*Sterl.* None, gentlemen, but of those ladies making.

*Mrs. Heidel.* You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

*Flow.* The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but, why were we to be frighten'd out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

*Miss Sterl.* But, sir, by to-morrow-morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service—the birds now in that cage would have flown away.



*Enter Lord OGLEBY, in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c. leaning on CANTON.*

*Lord Og.* I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

*Sterl.* Ay, ay, 'tis all over!—Here's my lord too.

*Lord Og.* What's all this shrieking and screaming? Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope?

*Mrs. Heidel.* Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is lock'd up with your angelic nephew in that chamber.

*Lord Og.* My nephew! then will I be excommunicated.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with the younger sister; and the younger sister has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watched them and call'd up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

*Lord Og.* Look'e, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know too that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, shan't I, Mr. Sterling? [*Smiling.*] what say you?

*Sterl.* [*Sulkily.*] To be sure, my lord.—These bawling women have been the ruin of everything.

[*Aside.*]

*Lord Og.* But come, I'll end this business in a trice—if you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and

Mr. Sterling will ensure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. Heidel. The horrid creatures!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord Og. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate. Now to our experiment!

[*Advancing towards the door.*]

Miss Sterl. Now, what will they do?—my heart will beat through my bosom.

[*Enter Betty with the key.*]

Betty. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies.

[*Going to unlock the door.*]

Mrs. Heidel. There's impudence.

Lord Og. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bed-chamber, [*To Betty.*] open the door, and intreat Sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there) to appear and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors.—Call Sir John Melvil into the court!

[*Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL, on the other side.*]

Sir John. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. Heidel. Hey-day!

Miss Sterl. Astonishment!

Sir John. What's all this alarm and confusion? there is nothing but hurry in the house; what is the reason of it?

*Lord Og.* Because you have been in that chamber; have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it——

*Trav.* This is the clearest alibi I ever knew,  
*Mr. Serjeant.*

*Flow.* *Luce clarius.*

*Lord Og.* Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolicks, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But come [*To Betty.*] open the door, and intreat your amiable mistress to come forth, and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

*Betty.* [*Opening the door.*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*Pertly.*]

*Enter FANNY, in great confusion.*

*Miss Sterl.* You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in!

*Mrs. Heidel.* Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! her guilt confounds her!

*Flow.* Silence in the court, ladies!

*Fanny.* I am confounded, indeed, madam!

*Lord Og.* Don't droop, my beauteous lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind.—Pour conviction into their ears and raptures into mine. [*Smiling.*]

*Fanny.* I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which to conceal has been the misfortune and misery of my—  
[*Faints away.*]

*Lord Og.* She faints; help, help! for the fairest and best of women!

*Betty.* [Running to her.] O, my dear mistress!—help, help, there!

*Sir John.* Ha! let me fly to her assistance.

*LOVEWELL rushes out of the Chamber.*

*Lov.* My Fanny in danger! I can contain no longer.—Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this!—speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny!—let me but hear thy voice, open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life!

[During this speech they are all in amazement.]

*Miss Sterl.* Lovewell!—I am easy.

*Mrs. Heidel.* I am thunderstruck!

*Lord Og.* I am petrified!

*Sir John.* And I undone!

*Fanny.* [Recovering.] O, Lovewell!—even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

*Sterl.* What now! did not I send you to London, sir?

*Lord Og.* Eh!—What! How's this! by what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber?

*Lov.* By that right which makes me the happiest of men; and by a title which I would not forgo, for any the best of kings could give.

*Betty.* I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnanimity.

*Lord Og.* I am annihilated!

*Sterl.* I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak.—Zounds, what have you to say to me? Lovewell, you are a villain.—You have broke your word with me.

*Fanny.* Indeed, sir, he has not—you forbid him to think of me when it was out of his power to obey you; we have been married these four months.

*Sterl.* And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam.

*Fanny.* Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

*Sterl.* Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly; and you shall follow him, madam.

*Lord Og.* And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Look ye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them is to forgive the cause of them; which I do from my soul.—Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; 'tis a debt of honour, and must be paid—you swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without errors excepted.

*Sterl.* I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of all other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls like herself



to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

*Lov.* I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

*Mrs. Heidel.* Indiscretion, quotha! a mighty pretty delicat word to express obedience!

*Lord Og.* For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls, I pity them. And you must forgive them too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling!

*Sterl.* Why, why, as to that, my lord—to be sure he is a relation of yours, my lord—what say you, sister Heidelberg?

*Mrs. Heidel.* The girl's ruin'd, and I forgive her.

*Sterl.* Well—so do I then.—Nay, no thanks—  
[*To Lovewell and Fanny, who seem preparing to speak.*] there's an end of the matter.

*Lord Og.* But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

*Lov.* Your kindness, my lord—I can scarce believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude; I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship. For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps will not repent your goodness to me. And

you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you.—As for you, Sir John—

*Sir John.* No apologies to me, Lovewell, I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, and yourself, and that lady, (who, I hope, will pardon my behaviour) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

*Leo.* And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, yet all our joys will be damp't, if his lordship's generosity, and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness, should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors. [*To the audience.*]

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



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## EPILOGUE.

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Written by Mr. GARRICK.

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### CHARACTERS OF THE EPILOGUE.

Lord Minum, - - - - Mr. Dodd.  
Colonel Trill, - - - - Mr. Vernon.  
Sir Patrick Mahony, - - Mr. Moody.  
Miss Crotchet, - - - - Mrs. ———  
Mrs. Quaver, - - - - Mrs. Lee.  
First Lady, - - - - Mrs. Bradshaw.  
Second Lady, - - - - Miss Mills.  
Third Lady, - - - - Mrs. Dorman.

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### SCENE, *an Assembly.*

*Several Persons at Cards, at different Tables; among the rest,  
Colonel TRILL, Lord MINUM, Mrs. QUAYER, Sir PATRICK MAHONY.*

### *At the Quadrille Table.*

*Colonel Trill.*

LADIES, with leave——

*2d Lady. Pafs!*

*3d Lady. Pafs!*

*Mrs. Qu. You must do more.*

*Col. T. Indeed I can't.*

*Mrs. Qu. I play in Hearts.*

*Col. T. Encore!*

2d Lady. What luck !

Col. T. To-night at Drury-Lane is play'd  
A Comedy, and *leur nouvelle*—a Spade !  
Is not Miss Crotchet at the play ?

Mrs. Qu. My niece  
Has made a party, fir, to damn the piece.

*At the Whist Table.*

Ld. Min. I hate a playhouse—Trump—It makes me sick,

1st Lady. We're two by Honours, ma'am.

Ld. Min. And we th' odd trick.

Pray, do you know the author, Colonel Trill ?

Col. T. I know no poets, Heaven be prais'd—Spadille—

1st Lady. I'll tell you who, my lord. [*Whispers Ld. Min.*

Ld. Min. What, he again !

' And dwell such daring souls in little men ?'

' Be whose it will, they down our throats will cram it.

Col. T. O, no—I have a Club—the best—We'll damn it.

Mrs. Qu. O, bravo, colonel!—Music is my flame.

Ld. Min. And mine, by Jupiter!—We've won the game.

Col. T. What, do you love all music ?

Mrs. Qu. No, not Handel's.

And nasty plays—

Ld. Min. Are fit for Goths and Vandals.

[*Rise from the table and pay.*

*From the Piquette Table.*

Sir Pat. Well, faith and troth, that Shakspeare was no fool !

Col. T. I'm glad you like him, fir—so ends the Pool.

[*They pay, and rise from the table.*

SONG, by the Colonel.

I hate all their nonsense,  
Their Shakspeare's and Johnson's,  
Their plays, and their playhouse, and bards :  
'Tis singing, not saying ;  
A fig for all playing,  
But playing as we do, at cards.

I love to see Jonas,  
 Am pleas'd too with Cornus;  
 Each well the spectator rewards.  
 So clever, so neat in  
 Their tricks and their cheating!  
 Like them, we would fain deal our cards.

*Sir Pat.* King Lear is touching!—And how fine to see  
 Ould Hamlet's Ghost!—'To be, or not to be.'—  
 What are your Op'r's to Othello's roar?  
 Oh, he's an angel of a Blackamoor!

*Ld. Min.* What, when he choaks his wife!—

*Col. T.* And calls her whore?

*Sir Pat.* King Richard calls his horse—And then Macbeth,  
 Whene'er he murders—takes away the breath.  
 My blood runs cold at every syllable,  
 To see the dagger that's invisible. [*All laugh.*]  
 Laugh if you please—a pretty play—

*Ld. Min.* Is pretty.

*Sir Pat.* And when there's wit in't—

*Col. T.* To be sure 'tis witty.

*Sir Pat.* I love the playhouse now—so light and gay,  
 With all those candles—they have ta'en away!

[*All laugh.*]

For all your game, what makes it so much brighter?

*Col. T.* Put out the lights, and then—

*Ld. Min.* 'Tis so much lighter.

*Sir Pat.* Pray, do you mane, sirs, more than you exprefs?

*Col. T.* Just as it happens—

*Ld. Min.* Either more or less.

*Mrs. Qu.* An't you asham'd, sir?

[*To Sir Pat.*]

*Sir Pat.* Me!—I seldom blush:—

For little Shakspeare, faith, I'd take a push. [*play.*]

*Ld. Min.* News, news!—Here comes Miss Crotchet from the

*Enter Miss CROTCHET.*

*Mrs. Qu.* Well, Crotchet, what's the news?

*Miss Cro.* We've lost the day.

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*Col. T.* Tell us, dear miss, all you have heard and seen.

*Miss Cro.* I'm tired—a chair—here; take my capuchin.

*Ld. Min.* And isn't it damn'd, miss?

*Miss Cro.* No, my lord, not quite.

But we shall damn it.

*Col. T.* When?

*Miss Cro.* To-morrow-night.

There is a party of us, all of fashion,

Resolved to exterminate this vulgar passion:

A playhouse! what a place!—I must forswear it:

A little mischief only makes one bear it.

Such crowds of city folks!—so rude and pressing!

And their horse laughs, so hideously distressing!

Whene'er we hiss'd, they frown'd, and fell a swearing,

Like their own Guildhall giants—fierce and staring!

*Col. T.* What said the folks of fashion; were they crows?

*Ld. Min.* The rest have no more judgment than my horse.

*Miss Cro.* Lord Grimly said, 'twas execrable stuff.

Says one—Why so, my lord?—My lord took snuff.

In the first act Lord George began to doze,

And criticis'd the author thro' his nose;

So loud indeed, that as his lordship snor'd,

The pit turn'd round, and all the brutes encor'd.

Some lords, indeed, approv'd the author's jokes.

*Ld. Min.* We have among us, miss, some foolish folks.

*Miss Cro.* Says poor Lord Simper—Well, now to my mind,

The piece is good;—but he's both deaf and blind.

*Sir Pat.* Upon my soul, a very pretty story!

And quality appears in all its glory.

There was some merit in the piece, no doubt:

*Miss Cro.* O, to be sure!—if one could find it out.

*Col. T.* But tell us, miss, the subject of the play.

*Miss Cro.* Why, 'twas a marriage—yes—a marriage—stay—

A lord, an aunt, two sisters, and a merchant—

A baronet, ten lawyers, a fat serjeant,

Are all produc'd—to talk with one another;

And about something make a mighty pother!

They all go in and out, and to and fro ;  
 And talk and quarrel—as they come and go—  
 Then go to bed—and then get up—and then—  
 Scream, faint, scold, kiss—and go to bed again.—

[All laugh.

Such is the play—Your judgment—never sham it :—

Col. T. Oh, damn it !

Mrs. Qu. Damn it !

1<sup>st</sup> Lady. Damn it !

Miss Cro. Damn it.

Ld. Min. Damn it !

Sir Pat. Well, faith, you speak your minds, and I'll be free—  
 Good night—this company's too good for me. [Going.

Col. T. Your judgment, dear Sir Patrick, makes us proud.

[All laugh.

Sir Pat. Laugh, if you please, but, pray, don't laugh so loud.

[Exit.

#### RECITATIVE.

Col. T. Now the barbarian's gone, miss, tune your tongue ;  
 And let us raise our spirits high with song.

#### RECITATIVE.

Miss Cro. Colonel, *de tout mon cœur*—I've one in *petto*,  
 Which you shall join, and make it a *duetto*.

#### RECITATIVE.

Ld. Min. *Bella Signora, et amico mio*,  
 I too will join, and then we'll make a *trio*.

Col. T. Come all and join the full-mouth'd chorus ;  
 And drive all tragedy and comedy before us.

*All the Company rise, and advance to the front of the Stage.*

## AIR.

**Col. T.** Would you ever go to see a tragedy?

*Miss Cro.* Never, never;

**Col. T.** A comedy?

*Ld. Min.* Never, never.

Live for ever!

Tweddle-dum, and tweddle-dee,

**Col. T. Ld. Min. and Miss Cro.** Live for ever.

Tweddle-dum, and tweddle-dee,

## CHORUS.

Would you ever go to see, &c.



